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HORROR TALES

JAN
1972
60¢

IN THIS ISSUE:
THE SCARIFYING TERROR
IN THE
HOUSE OF BLOOD

HAIR-RAISING CHILLS
WITH THE
MONSTER

THE GRUESOME SHOCK
OF
SATAN'S CORPSE

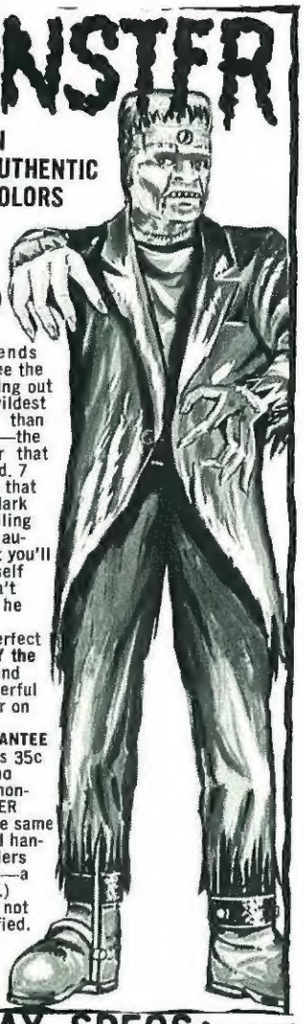
PLUS
OTHER TALES
OF HORROR

MONSTER

7 FEET TALL / IN AUTHENTIC COLORS

GLOW in the DARK EYES

ONLY $1.00



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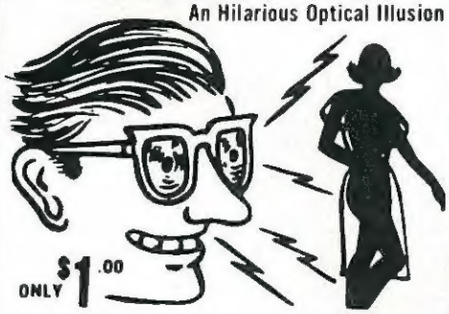
An Hilarious Optical Illusion



ONLY $1.00

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"STINGER AUTOMATIC"
50-22 Cal. Pellets Free.

Looks and Feels Like Full Size "James Bond" style German Automatic **5½ inches long — 4½ inches high.** Fires 22 cal. pellets just as fast as you can pull the trigger with realistic moving slide action. Great for fast action combat—type target practice. 50 reusable 22 cal. pellets free. Free supply of targets. Money back if not satisfied. Just send $1.25 plus 25c Not sold in NY City.

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- 9" Overall Length
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- Opens instantly
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Pellet Firing Target Pistol

and SILENCER

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Color or Black & White

ONLY $6.98 Complete

***FREE*: NEW THRILLING SENSATION**

Add 3-D Stereo effect with "Miracle Specs" which makes people look so full and real you can reach out and touch them. One pair comes with each projector. Additional pairs are $2.98 each.

FEATURES:

- Sturdy Construction
- Complete with Screen
- Projects color or black and white
- Speed Control for fast or slow motion
- Guaranteed

HAVE ALL THE FUN OF PRIVATE MOVIES NOW AT THIS LOW PRICE

Precision engineered and compact. Completely portable in its own case. Needs no electric outlet since it is battery operated. So simple and safe to use even a child can operate it. Its double lens focusing is sure and easy for bright, clear pictures.

10 DAY FREE TRIAL—Money back guarantee on 10 day free trial. Don't delay—send $6.98 plus 75c for postage and handling or send $1.00 good will deposit and pay postman balance on delivery plus C.O.D. and postage charges. Add $2.98 for each pair of additional "Miracle Specs."

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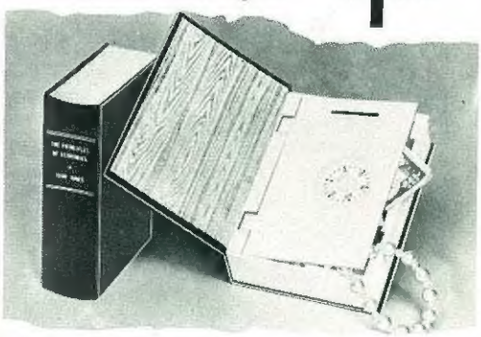
SECRET BOOK SAFE

With Combination Lock Only You Can Open

ONLY $1.00



The Secret Book Safe looks just like any book so no one would think to look for valuables in it. But even chance discovery leaves your possessions safe — securely locked by a combination only YOU know — because YOU yourself have set it. Simple instructions show you how. Tough under structure is covered with simulated leather binding to look just like a real book. Just send $1.00 plus 35c postage and handling for each book safe you want. Money back if you are not satisfied.

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"STINGER AUTOMATIC"
50 22 CAL. PELLETS FREE
Looks and Feels Like Real Pocket Automatic — Loads 15 Shots

Fires 22 cal. pellets just as fast as you can pull the trigger. Great for fast action combat-type target practice. 50 re-usable 22 cal. pellets free. Free supply of targets. Money back if not satisfied. Just send $1.00 plus 25c for postage and handling to **Honor House Dept. 472RA83**
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HORROR TALES

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CARL BURGOS, Editor IRVING FASS, Art Director
EZRA JACKSON, Art Editor

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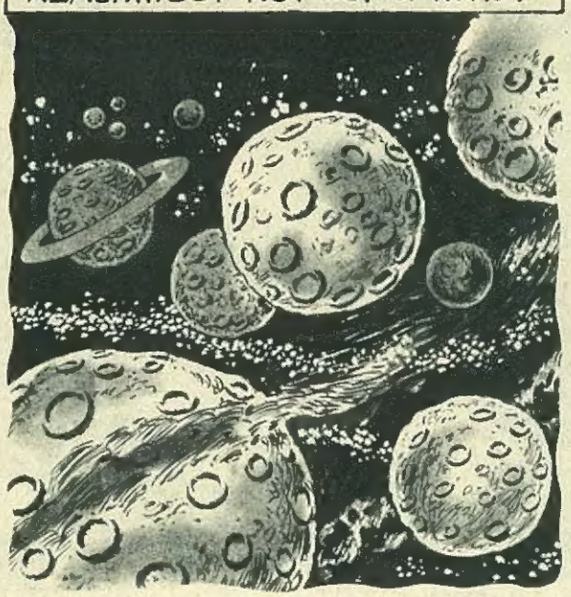
OUT OF NOWHERE CAME THE SPACE MONSTER WHOSE MISSION WAS MURDER! THE BEAST FROM SATURN CALMLY SELECTED ITS VICTIMS AND SLEW THEM! WHAT WAS THE SECRET OF HIS INVISIBILITY? HOW MANY CITIZENS MUST DIE BEFORE THE POLICE COULD FIND... **THE KILLER FROM SATURN??**

MAN IS STILL EXPLORING THE WORLD HE LIVES IN! THE WORLD OF SEA AND JUNGLE AND ICE! YET HE KNOWS NEXT TO NOTHING ABOUT THE WORLD OF SPACE!



THE PREY FEELS SECURE AS HE LIGHTS A CIGARETTE!

HE TRIES TO SCREAM BUT THE SCREAM GURGLES SILENTLY IN HIS THROAT! HE CAN ONLY STEP BACK-WARD AS THE CREATURE STEPS FORWARD..

HE CAN ONLY GAZE WITH TERROR UPON A SIGHT NO HUMAN EYES HAVE EVER SEEN BEFORE!

HE CAN ONLY PERISH...

AND KEEP HIS SILENCE!

NOR IS THERE ANY UNUSUAL EXCITEMENT WHEN HIS BODY IS FOUND!
WHAT WAS IT, ED!
A ROUTINE MUGGING JOB! THIS WOULDN'T HAPPEN IF THEY HAD MORE COPS!

THEN THEY FOUND THEIR FIRST COP...

...THEIR FIRST JANITOR...

THEIR FIRST JUNK MAN...

THEIR FIRST TRUCK DRIVER...

AND THEIR FIRST LOVERS LANE COUPLE...
LOOK AT THE EXPRESSION ON THEIR FACES!
EVER SEE SUCH HORROR? IT'S THE SAME THING WITH THE OTHER STIFFS WE'VE BEEN FINDING! THEY ALL LOOK SCARED TO DEATH!
THE KILLINGS WENT ON UNABATED! THE DEAD ARRIVED AT THE MORGUE ...ON SCHEDULE!
THE MUGGER AGAIN?
I DON'T KNOW! WAIT'LL I SEE HIS FACE!
YEP! IT'S THE MUGGER! THIS KILLER DOESN'T HAVE TO STAB 'EM TO DEATH! THEY'RE SHOCKED TO DEATH...
BUT WHAT DO THEY SEE?
WHO KNOWS! IT CAN'T BE HUMAN...OTHER WISE THEY WOULDN'T LOOK THAT WAY!
C'MON IT'S GOT TO BE HUMAN!
THE POLICE DEPARTMENT WAS NOW PAYING MORE ATTENTION TO IT...
THE POLICE REQUEST THAT THE PUBLIC OBEY A VOLUNTARY CURFEW UNTIL A MUGGER WHO'S BEEN TERRORIZING THE CITY IS CAUGHT!
WKBX
REPORT ANY STRANGE OCCURENCES OR ECCENTRIC INDIVIDUALS TO THE NEAREST PRECINCT!
THE VIGILANCE INCREASED... BUT SO DID THE MURDERS!
HOLD ONTO YOUR HATS, BOYS! THE MUGGER'S GOING INTO MASS PRODUCTION! IT JUST CAME OVER THE T.V.! TONIGHT HE KILLED THREE PEOPLE!

WE'RE TRIPLING OUR PATROLS!
THE KILLER MUST BE CAUGHT! BEFORE THE CITY GETS PANICKED!

DAILY CRONICLE
MURDER EPIDEMIC STRIKES CITY
LATE EDITION
MYSTRY MURDER
DAILY
NO CLUES POLICE BAFFLED
Evening Paper
POLICE BAFF
THIS IS YOUR POLICE COMMISSIONER! EVERYTHING THAT CAN BE DONE IS BEING DONE TO CATCH THIS MANIAC!
JOURNAL NEWS
FIEND ATTACKS

BUT, THE DEATHS WENT ON!
N-NO! EEEAA!

THE PATROLS WERE QUADRUPLED!...SO WERE THE MURDERS!

THEN ONE NIGHT...SOMEONE BESIDES A VICTIM SAW SOMETHING...
HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON THERE?

WHO'S SCREAMING?
THERE'S SOMEBODY IN THE BACKYARD!
I'VE GOT A FLASHLIGHT LET'S SEE!

AIIII!
LOOK!

W-WHAT IS IT?
I-I DON'T KNOW! I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT BEFORE!
HE'S EIGHT FEET TALL! AN' LOOK HOW HE'S DRESSED!

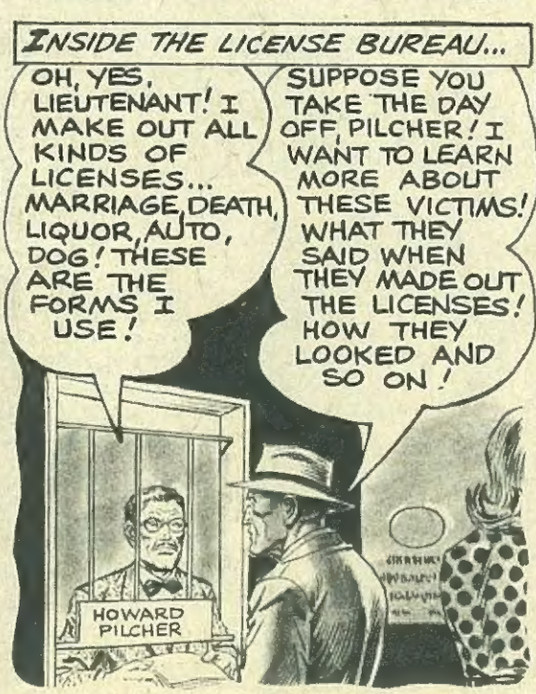
PROPHETIC WORDS! THE UNEARTHLEY KILLER WAS NOT PARTICULAR! HIS APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION WAS STRONG!

NEXT MORNING...
SEEMS OUR BOY ISN'T PARTICULAR WHO HE KILLS AS LONG AS HE GETS A VICTIM... ANY VICTIM!
THAT FITS IN WITH THE SCIENTIST'S THEORY THAT WE'VE BEEN INVADED BY A KILLER FROM SATURN!

THE FIEND ATTACKS! IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO THE VICTIMS ARE! IT'S AS IF SOMEBODY WERE AT WAR WITH THE WORLD!
THEN IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE SOMEBODY FROM SPACE! CRIMINALS ARE ALWAYS FIGHTING A WAR AGAINST LAW AND ORDER!

YOU'RE HINTING AT SOMETHING, JORDAN! WHAT IS IT?
I'M CURIOUS IF ALL THESE DIVERSE PEOPLE AREN'T "RELATED" IN SOME WAY! NOT BY TIES OF BLOOD... BUT BY ACTIVITY! I'M CHECKING EACH VICTIM!

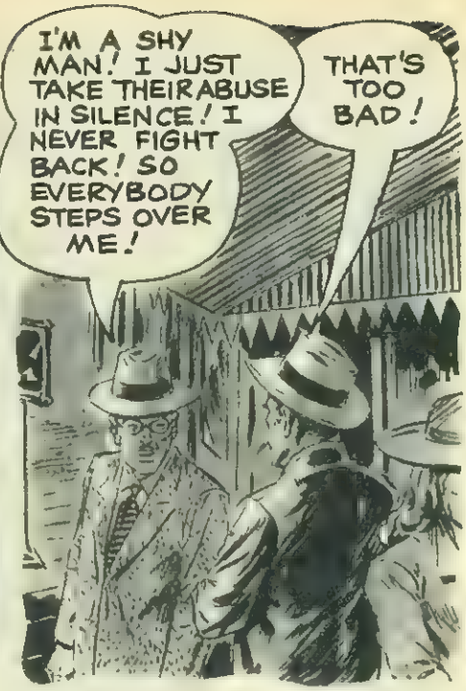
A WEEK LATER...
SO YOU FOUND OUT EACH VICTIM APPLIED TO THE LICENSE BUREAU THE DAY HE WAS KILLED! BUT WHAT DOES IT PROVE!
I DON'T KNOW, ED! IT'S THE ONLY ELEMENT ALL THE DEATHS HAVE IN COMMON!

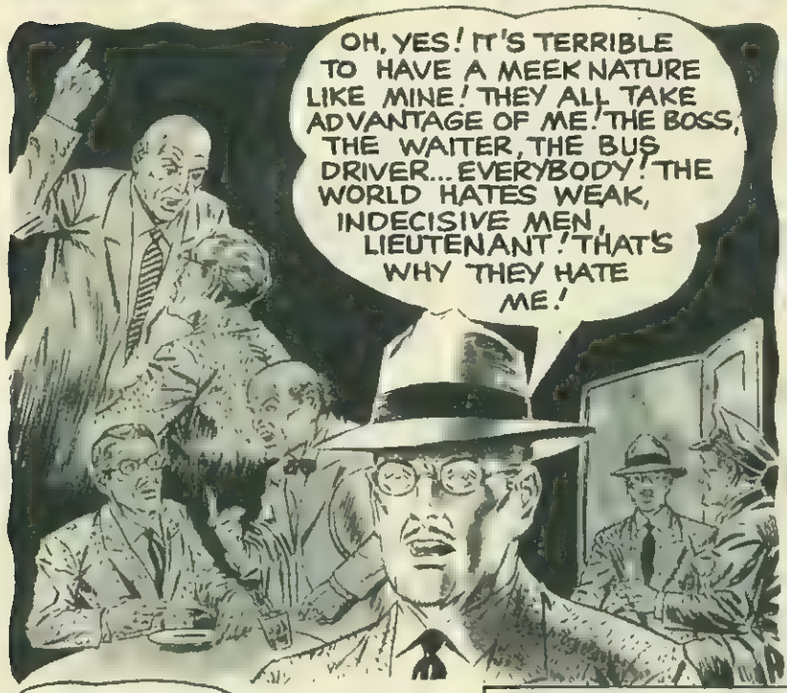

INSIDE THE LICENSE BUREAU...
OH, YES, LIEUTENANT! I MAKE OUT ALL KINDS OF LICENSES... MARRIAGE, DEATH, LIQUOR, AUTO, DOG! THESE ARE THE FORMS I USE!
SUPPOSE YOU TAKE THE DAY OFF, PILCHER! I WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE VICTIMS! WHAT THEY SAID WHEN THEY MADE OUT THE LICENSES! HOW THEY LOOKED AND SO ON!
HOWARD PILCHER

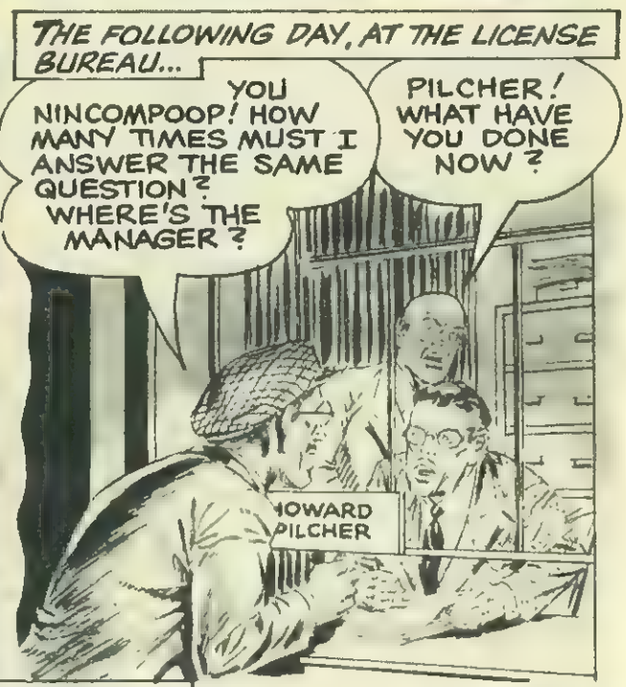
TAKE THE DAY OFF? ARE YOU CRAZY, PILCHER? I'VE NEVER KNOWN YOU TO BREAK THE RULES! OR EVEN ASK ME FOR FAVORS!
N-NO, SIR! BUT...
HE'LL BREAK THE RULES THIS TIME! I'M LIEUTENANT JORDAN... FROM HOMICIDE!

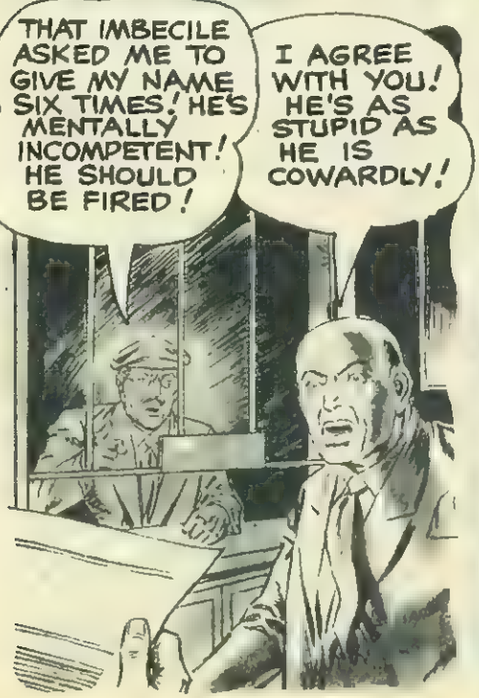
SHORTLY AFTER...
IT'S A RELIEF GETTING AWAY FROM THE BUREAU!
DID ANY OF THE VICTIMS TREAT YOU BADLY?

OH, YES, PEOPLE ARE ALL ALIKE, YOU KNOW! EVERYBODY WANTS TO EXERCISE POWER OVER SOMEBODY!
TRUE! I HADN'T THOUGHT OF IF BEFORE!


I'M A SHY MAN! I JUST TAKE THEIR ABUSE IN SILENCE! I NEVER FIGHT BACK! SO EVERYBODY STEPS OVER ME!
THAT'S TOO BAD!


OH, YES! IT'S TERRIBLE TO HAVE A MEEK NATURE LIKE MINE! THEY ALL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ME! THE BOSS, THE WAITER, THE BUS DRIVER... EVERYBODY! THE WORLD HATES WEAK, INDECISIVE MEN, LIEUTENANT! THAT'S WHY THEY HATE ME!


THE FOLLOWING DAY, AT THE LICENSE BUREAU...
YOU NINCOMPOOP! HOW MANY TIMES MUST I ANSWER THE SAME QUESTION? WHERE'S THE MANAGER?
PILCHER! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE NOW?
HOWARD PILCHER

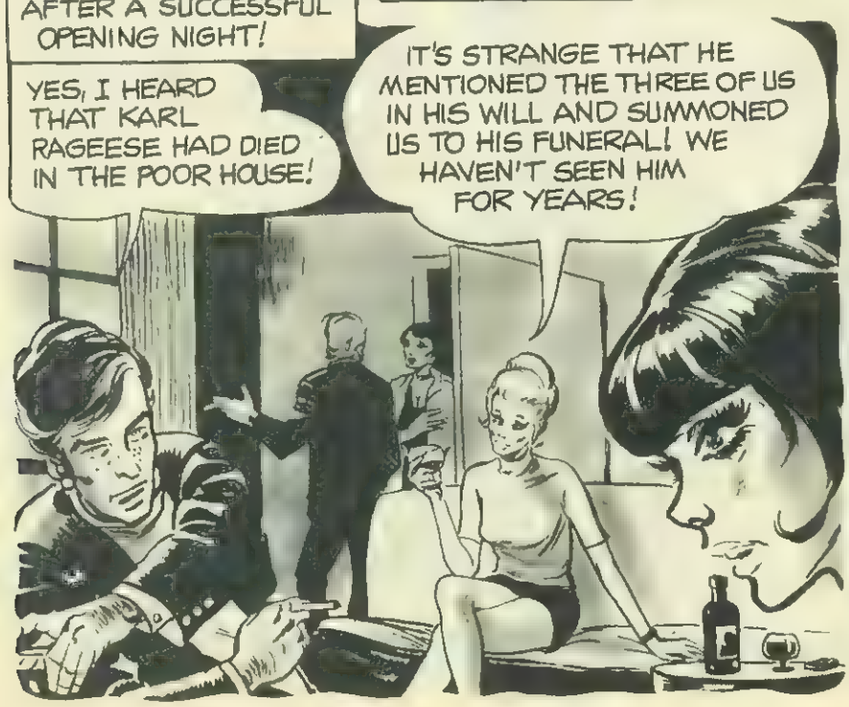

THAT IMBECILE ASKED ME TO GIVE MY NAME SIX TIMES! HE'S MENTALLY INCOMPETENT! HE SHOULD BE FIRED!
I AGREE WITH YOU! HE'S AS STUPID AS HE IS COWARDLY!

THAT NIGHT, AS GEORGE MUNSON CAME HOME TO 42 WEST STREET, SOMEBODY WAS WAITING FOR HIM!
WHO'S THERE? I HEARD A SOUND! WHO'S HIDING THERE?

OH! IT'S YOU!

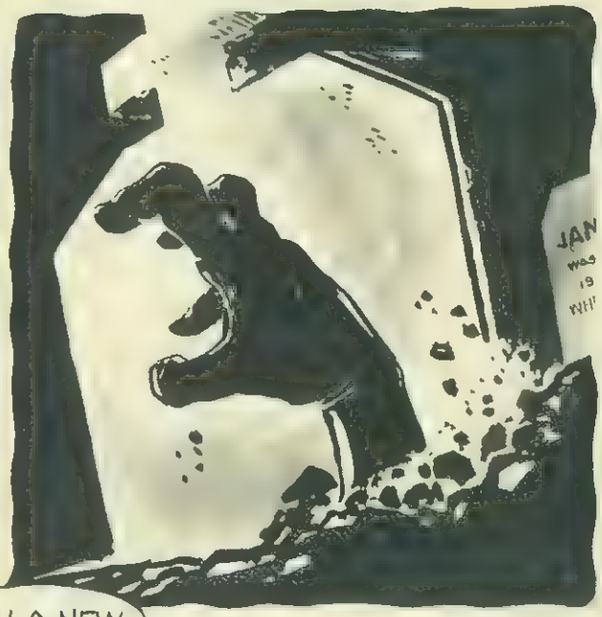
YOU DON'T SCARE ME, MY FRIEND!
UKKK!
THE BIGGER THEY ARE, THE HARDER THEY FALL!
OOFF!
IKKKK!
UNDRESS HIM, BOY'S! YOU'LL FIND YOUR KILLER FROM SATURN IS NONE OTHER THAN OSWALD PILCHER, CLERK IN THE LICENSE BUREAU!
YOU WERE RIGHT! PILCHER HATED TO BE BROW BEATEN AND HE KILLED ANY APPLICANT WHO ABUSED HIM!
HOLY SMOKES! THIS IS A COSTUME!
RIGHT! PILCHER NEEDED SOME SYMBOL OF POWER FOR A DISGUISE AND CHOSE A MONSTER FROM SPACE!
NO WONDER HE WAS 8 FEET TALL! HE WAS WEARING STILTS!
PILCHER SUFFERS FROM DEMENTIA PRAECOX... DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR... HIS ONE IMPULSE IN LIFE IS TO BECOME POWERFUL, TO INSPIRE TERROR!
WHERE SHALL WE TAKE THE KILLER, LIEUTENANT?
TO HIS CAR... WHICH HE USED TO GET AROUND TOWN! THIS TIME PILCHER'S CAR WILL TAKE HIM... NOT TO ANOTHER VICTIM... BUT TO THE BOOBY HATCH!
A WEEK LATER, IN A STATE ASYLUM...
LOOK HOW STRONG I AM! I'M THE MOST POWERFUL MAN IN THE WORLD! I'M THE KILLER FROM SATURN!
HE ALWAYS WILL BE ...UP HERE... WHERE HE CAN SAFELY KILL... IN HIS IMAGINATION!
The End

THE LEGITIMATE THEATRE IS A STRANGE WORLD, BUT NO STRANGER THAN THE MAKE-UP MAN WHO MADE A PACT WITH THE VERY DEVIL HIMSELF!.... AND THEN SOUGHT VENGEANCE ONLY TO PAY SATAN'S PRICE!
MY FACE! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MY FACE! AIIEEEE!
SATAN'S CORPSE


AT A COCKTAIL PARTY AFTER A SUCCESSFUL OPENING NIGHT!
YES, I HEARD THAT KARL RAGEESE HAD DIED IN THE POOR HOUSE!
IT'S STRANGE THAT HE MENTIONED THE THREE OF US IN HIS WILL AND SUMMONED US TO HIS FUNERAL! WE HAVEN'T SEEN HIM FOR YEARS!

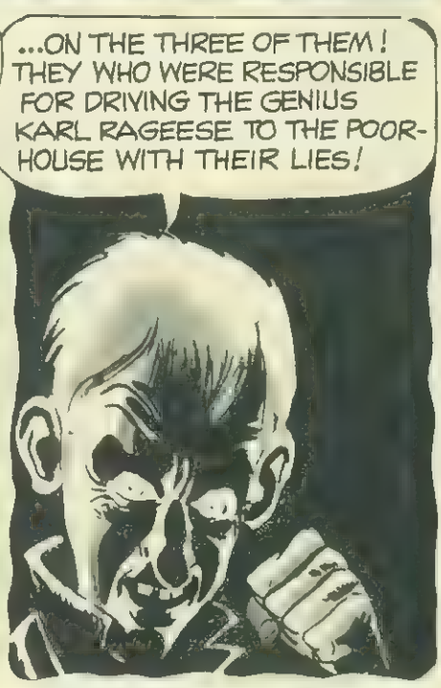
GET OFF IT! YOU KNOW HE ALWAYS ACCUSED US OF HAVING BEEN THE CAUSE OF HIS DOWNFALL!

THE NEXT DAY....
PECULIAR THAT WE WERE THE ONLY THREE INVITED TO THE BURIAL! WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT?
FRANKLY, I DON'T CARE! LET'S GET AWAY FROM HERE! WE ALL HAVE MATINEES TO DO TODAY!
RIP


BUT LATER THAT EVENING A WEIRD EVENT TRANSPIRES!

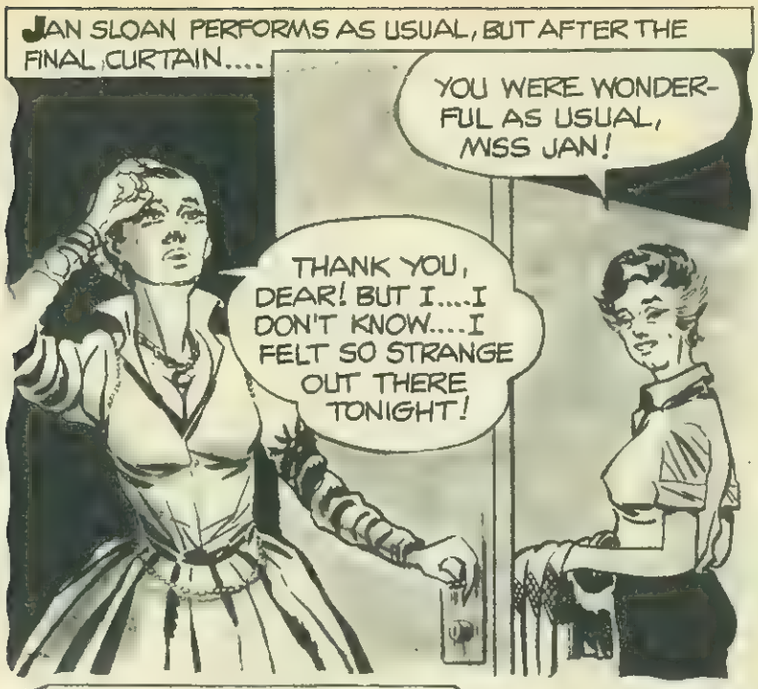
SO, THEY THINK THEY'VE SEEN THE LAST OF ME, EH!.. ..SATAN AND ME HAVE MADE A PACT! HE HE HAW!

WITH A NEW BODY AND FACE AND HYPNOTIC POWERS I'LL HAVE MY REVENGE!


...ON THE THREE OF THEM! THEY WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR DRIVING THE GENIUS KARL RAGEESE TO THE POOR-HOUSE WITH THEIR LIES!

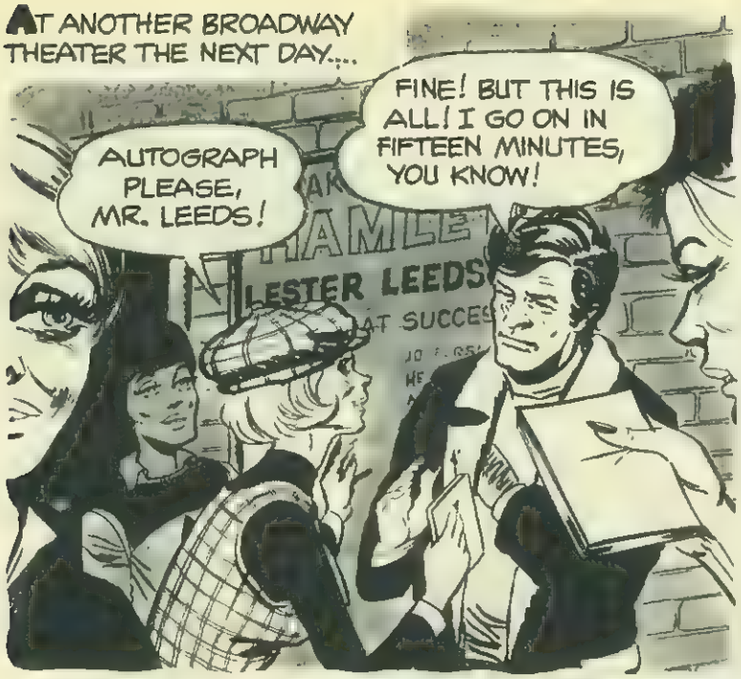
THE FOLLOWING EVENING...
ISN'T THAT MAKE-UP MAN HERE YET?
THERE'S A NEW MAN TONIGHT, MISS JAN! I'LL SEND HIM RIGHT IN!

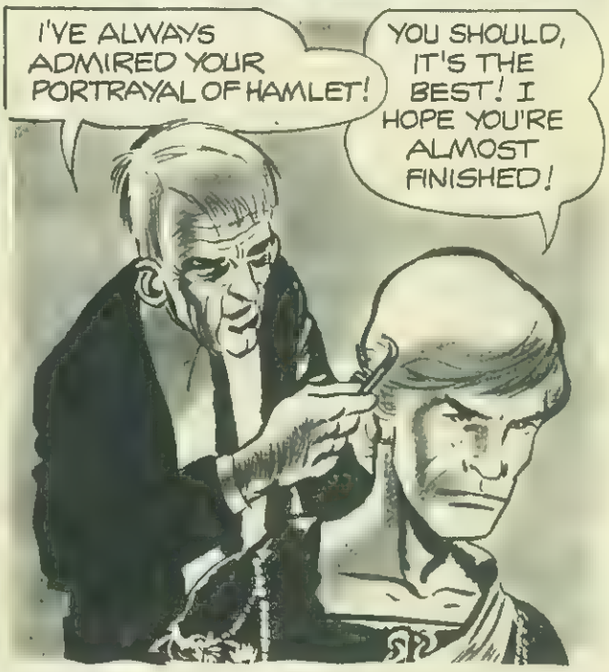
YOU SHALL BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL JULIET IN THE HISTORY OF THE THEATRE!
I ALWAYS HAVE BEEN!



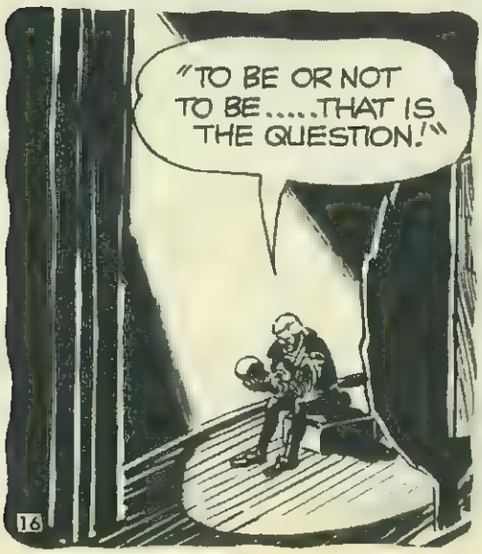
AND AS THE KNIFE, SEEMINGLY CONTROLLED BY AN INVISIBLE FORCE, PLUNGES INTO JAN SLOAN'S BODY.... A FANTASTIC FACIAL TRANSFORMATION OCCURS! AND EVEN HER FINAL PERFORMANCE HAS AN AUDIENCE!

AT ANOTHER BROADWAY THEATER THE NEXT DAY....





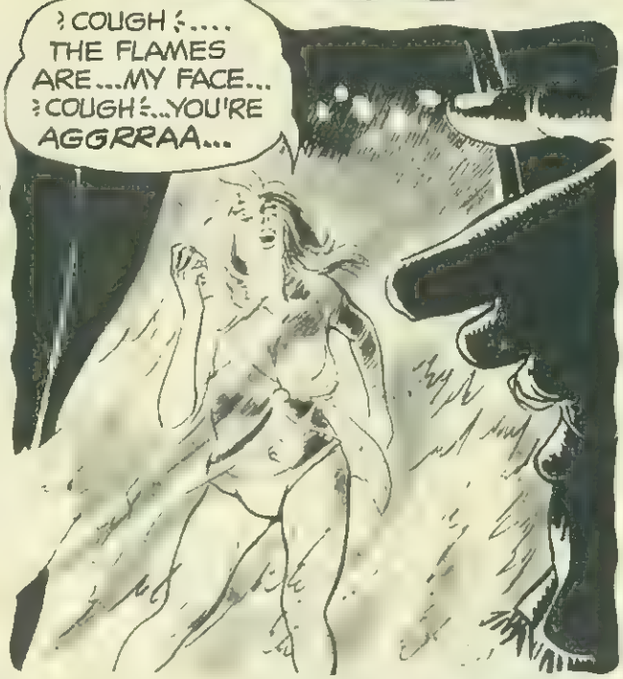
HIS MAKE-UP COMPLETE, LESTER LEEDS RENDERS HIS VERSION OF SHAKESPEARE'S HAMLET!



BUT AS LESTER READS HIS MAIL, A FANTASTIC COINCIDENCE OCCURS...
DRAT IT! I KNICKED MY FINGER WITH THIS LETTER OPENER! I NEVER.....I....
AND A GROTESQUE SCENE ENSUES!
THE FINGER IS.... WHAT---! MY FACE! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MY FACE?
AIIIEEEE!
AGGRRAAHH!
SPLENDID! DIE, LEEDS, DIE!
TWO OF THE THREE WITNESSES SUMMONED TO KARL RAGEESE'S FUNERAL HAVE DIED HIDEOUSLY! AND AT A NEARBY THEATER THAT NIGHT....THE THIRD, JO CARTER, PREPARES FOR HER APPEARANCE AS JOAN OF ARC!
I'M READY FOR MY MAKE-UP, DORIS! CALL IN THE NEW MAN!
YES, M'AM!
HERE I AM, MISS CARTER!
GOOD! LET'S GET TO WORK ON THIS!
THE ARTIST BEGINS HIS FIENDISH WORK!
YOU WILL BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL JOAN OF ARC EVER!
THANKS, I INTEND TO BE!

YOU'VE DONE A GOOD JOB! YOU MAY LEAVE NOW! I GO ON IN THREE MINUTES!
I'M FINISHED, MISS CARTER! THANK YOU!
THE AUDIENCE IS SPELL-BOUND AS JO CARTER ENACTS HER JOAN OF ARC!
"BUT I HEAR DIVINE VOICES, I TELL YOU!"
AFTER THE PERFORMANCE....
I...I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS, DORIS! BUT TONIGHT THAT ARTIFICIAL FIRE FELT LIKE IT WOULD REALLY BURN ME ALIVE!
YOU'RE JUST FATIGUED, M'AM!
YOUR AUTOGRAPH, MISS CARTER!
I'M VERY SORRY, BUT NOT TONIGHT! I'M VERY TIRED!
ARC
DORIS WAS RIGHT! MY ROLE OF JOAN OF ARC IS AN EXHAUSTING ONE!
ARRIVING AT HER LAVISH APARTMENT, THE BEAUTIFUL ACTRESS PREPARES FOR A RESTFUL EVENING!
WHEN THEY TIE ME TO THAT STAKE, I THINK THAT FIRE WILL--- WHA---

AND AS JO'S APARTMENT BECOMES A RAGING INFERNO, HER ANGUISHED FEATURES BECOME THOSE OF HER JOAN OF ARC! AND A WARPED ARTIST ADMIRES HIS HANDIWORK!



OH WELL, THERE ARE TIMES, WHEN EVEN SATAN CHANGES HIS MIND.... BESIDES, WHO WOULD BELIEVE THE DEVIL WAS FOND OF SHAKESPEARE? ...AND RESENTED THE DEATH OF THREE TALENTED PEOPLE?

The END

the HANGING MAN!

■ Sir Hilary James saw the thing first at dusk, while returning from a stroll on the fens. He said, half aloud, "I am tired," and passed his hands over his eyes; but the thing did not vanish. Then he looked at the thing steadily for a moment, and decided at last that it was one of those inexplicable optical illusions, similar to a mirage, which have come to so many tired wanderers. And though he was not at all tired this evening in 1931, this explanation gave him a certain satisfaction, and his vague uneasiness fell away from him. When he

got home, he forgot about it entirely.

Then, in the middle of the night, Sir Hilary awoke in sudden, unaccountable terror. He felt that he was stifling, and threw back the covers. Then he got up and raised the window. At that moment, he saw the thing for the second time. There it was on the slate-gray sky—a great black shadow, fixed upon the gray and white of the clouds, the shadow of a gallows-tree, and a man hanging from it.

A gigantic thing it was, an utterly impossible thing, and he continued to watch in fascination. It struck him suddenly that the thing rose out of the fens and up into the sky. But he knew there was nothing on the fens. Now he saw suddenly that there was a movement about the shadow, and as he watched, he saw that the man hanging was swinging gently to and fro in the sky. Then, abruptly, Sir Hilary reached up and pulled the shade across the window. A moment later, he turned up the light.

Sir Hilary James was not a model English gentleman. The countryside was rather soured on him, and he, while not an unpleasant gentleman, cared not a whit for the opinions of his neighbors. Most of them were simple country people, but there were not a few titles among them. Sir Hilary was himself a baronet of a rather obscure family. To the unfounded irritation of his titled neighbors, he refused to attend their social functions. To add to this, he strove noticeably to cut short their friendly calls, so that in time they stopped entirely. Nor did he ever return their visits. His general attitude was not conducive to intimacy, or even to a sort of vague friendless. It was not that he was a disagreeable person, and his neighbors seemed somehow to realize this, but that for some reason their presence disturbed him.

He was unmarried, and lived in his house on the fringe of the fens with his four servants. The secret of his attempts at isolation was variously interpreted by his neighbors. There were some who thought of him as hiding from the law, and some who looked upon him as a man with some dark secret to cloak. It had never occurred to these simple people that there might at some time be in the house near the fens a James who had no interest in them. As a matter of fact, Sir Hilary James was writing a book, a sort of history of his family, and with some journalistic experience behind him, he realized that interruptions of any kind might be fatal to his end. He took his recreation in lonely walks over the fens and in short runs up to London.

James had almost completed the history of his line when the apparition came upon him. After the occurrence on the fens, he took no more strolls and after what he saw from the window, he avoided the windows at night. But he could not escape the thing as easily as that. It was very difficult to keep from looking out the windows, and the sky was very easy to see. Besides, the shadow had no stationary form, but seemed designed, rather, to catch his eye. The history of James' line was destined not to be finished soon, and Sir Hilary James realized that the shadow on the sky was the distracting influence. When the thing began to appear by day, he yielded to his better judgment and called Sir Halstad Massingham, the famous nerve specialist and and authority on psychic disorders arising from the nervous system.

Sir Halstead, somewhat of an austere individual and the owner of a nature similar in many respects to that of Sir Hilary James, found his patient on the verge of a nervous collapse—not so much for fear of the shadow as from an inner knowledge that he would not be able to complete his history, on which task he had set his heart and mind.

Sir Halstead, with the air of the specialist who is reasonably certain of what his first analysis will disclose, made a preliminary examination of his patient, together with a thorough inquiry into his daily habits. The examination disclosed scarcely anything abnormal, a discovery which so disconcerted Sir Halstead that he suggested to Sir Hilary the advisability of calling in a consultant. James readily consented. Consequently, Sir Halstead wired to London for Dr. Robin Davey, the alienist. Dr. Davey, in the midst of his rise to prestige, could not very well afford to disregard Sir

Halstead's request. He arrived within twelve hours after his receipt of Sir Halstead's wire.

Together, the two of them gave James a rather rigid and uncomfortable cross-examination. This brought them nothing more than Sir Halstead had already learned from his patient. The tale of the shadow on the sky was regarded somewhat skeptically. Sir Halstead had been unable to see the shadow the preceding night, and that night Dr. Davey was likewise disappointed.

James assiduously avoided the windows, though in the middle of the night he called out, and, when Sir Halstead came to him, told him that the shadow had been reflected in the mirror opposite the window, and that he had seen the man hanging, and that the man was laughing silently and horribly. He had called, yes. Could the shade be lowered? The immediate result of this incident was a consultation between the two psychiatrists. Sir Hilary James was regarded as suffering from a most peculiar illusion, brought on perhaps by his isolation, added to the intense mental stress of his studies. In the end it was thought best to suggest to James that he force himself to face the shadow and watch it carefully as long as he could stand up under the strain of the thing. After some persuasion, James submitted hesitantly and the following night was fixed upon for the experiment.

It was decided that James was to watch the fens from the window of his chamber; he was to sit and stare steadily at whatever seemed to appear, and with the specialists on either side of him, try to convince himself that the thing was an optical illusion. To this arrangement Sir Hilary agreed with less reluctance than he had shown when the plan was first proposed. Eight o'clock that evening found the three of them sitting at the window. James gazing earnestly out across the lowlands, and the doctors closely observing their patient. It was to be expected that nothing would occur for the first hour or two. After an early excitement, James became amazingly calm, and toward ten o'clock took to joking with the specialists.

He had taken his eyes from the fens for a moment, and was looking at Sir Halstead when the thing came. When he turned again to look from the window, he stiffened perceptibly.

"It's there," he murmured.

Sir Halstead shot a quick glance at Dr. Davey; they nodded to each other, and began to watch their patient with redoubled vigilance.

"You will watch it carefully, and report every movement to us," said Sir Halstead in a low voice.

"Do not forget," put in Dr. Davey, "that it is in all possibility an optical illusion."

"But surely you can see it?" asked James in a distressed voice.

The specialists looked at each other again.

"It does seem—" began Dr. Davey, but Sir Halstead cut him short.

"There is nothing there!" he snapped.

"The man is swinging," said James, as if he had not heard.

Involuntarily Dr. Davey shot a quick glance out upon the lowlands, pale in the light of the full moon. There was nothing save a vast expanse of grass, and the sky was clear.

"He is swinging . . . faster and faster."

Sir Halstead reached forward and opened the window; a refreshing breath of air entered the room.

"It seems he is coming closer . . . closer. He is!" Sir Hilary James involuntarily jerked himself backward. At once he felt the strong hands of Sir Halstead pushing him forward again; and he had a short flash of the psychiatrist's determined face.

"Go on," said Sir Halstead.

"He is very close now," said James jerkily. "I am horribly afraid of him."

Simultaneously both specialists reached out and touched him; Sir Hilary appeared reassured.

"He is laughing in a silent voice —Oh! this is ghastly. I cannot stand it much longer."

"Go on," repeated Sir Halstead inexorably.

"He is just outside the window now, swinging to and fro . . . like . . . like a pendulum." At this point James became strangely silent.

"Watch him," persisted Sir Halstead. "Watch him closely."

"He is waving his hands now . . ." Sir Hilary paused again, but presently he went on. "Now he is putting them up to his neck . . . and he is taking the rope from his neck. He is laughing. He is pointing at the looped rope in his hands . . . He seems to be beckoning to me." Sir Hilary leaned forward suddenly; then he gave vent to a horrified scream: "No—no! My God, the window . . . the window . . ."

Neither Sir Halstead nor Dr. Davey had any clear conception of exactly what happened then. Both agreed that with one accord they had risen to lower the window at James' frantic scream; then both of them had been felled to the floor by a blow. They thought that James had got up with them, and, in flinging out his arms violently, had felled them. They were not hurt, but when they got up to look about, James had vanished utterly. The window was still open. Together the two of them ran to the window and looked out; but James was not below the window, as they had supposed he might be. There was no movement upon the fens, save the slowly undulating whiteness of the mists that were beginning to rise.

Then suddenly Dr. Davey looked up into the sky. He stumbled backwards and laid a trembling hand on Sir Halstead's arm. "My God, Massingham. There is something swinging in the moon —a man, I think."

Sir Halstead snorted and looked from the window up at the face of the moon. There was nothing there. "Nonsense," he snapped. "Seems to have got you, too. I think—"

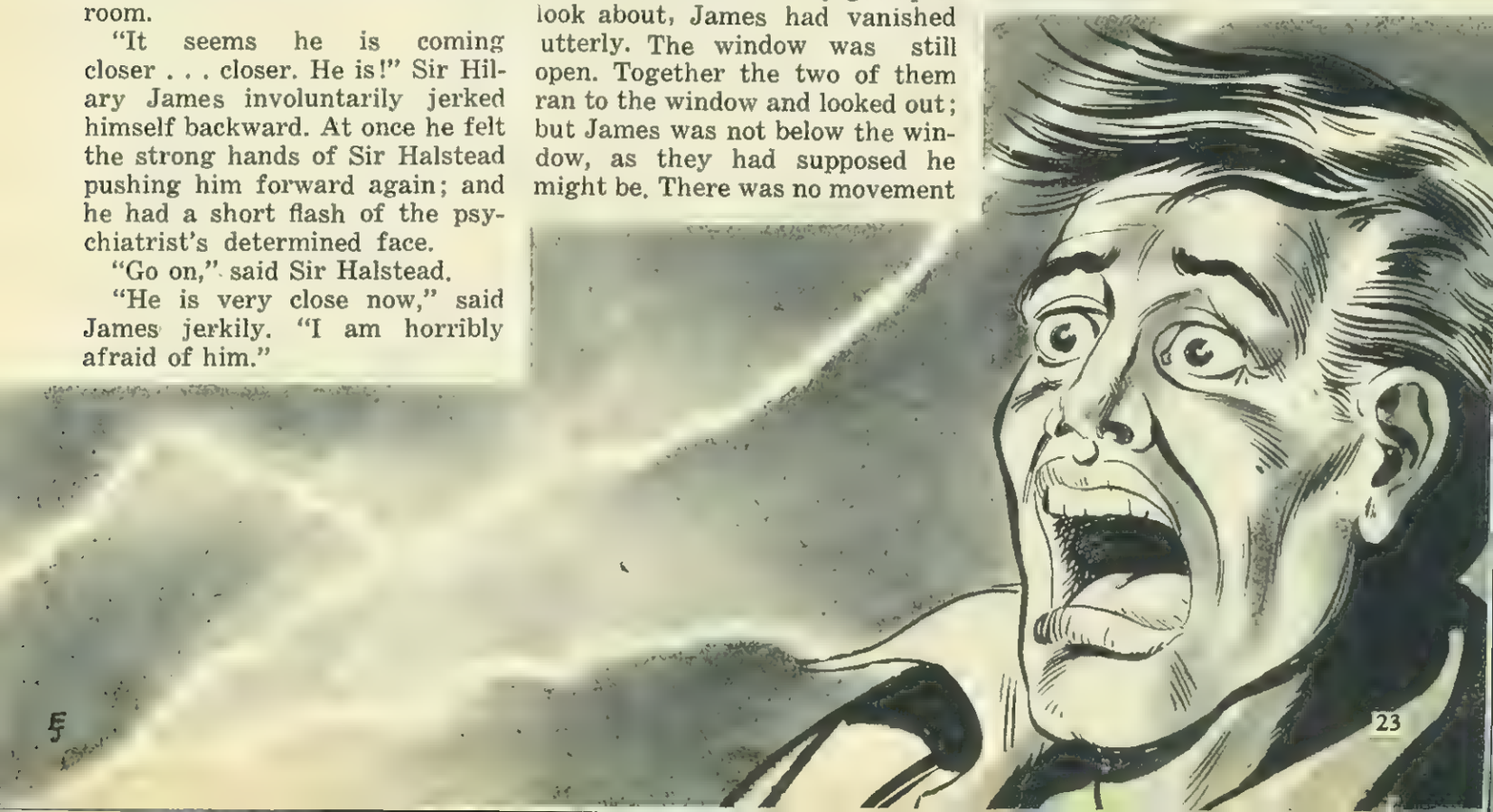
But his sentence was never finished, for suddenly out of the night came two faint cries, one following close upon the other. They came from somewhere out over the fens, and they were unmistakably cries of "Help!" Then there was complete and awful silence.

For a moment the two men stood there; then Dr. Davey rushed from the room, Sir Halstead in his wake.

"Rouse the servants Massingham," shouted Dr. Davey. "Hounds, too. I'm going to search every blessed inch of that bog land out there."

But Sir Halstead needed no urging. He had been struck by the same preposterous thought that had come to Dr. Davey.

Sir Halstead and the servants, most of them only half clothed,



were out upon the fens before Dr. Davey appeared. There was no inclination to wait for the specialist, and Sir Halstead set out at once with the servants. Sir Halstead was soon outdistanced by the younger servants, but he could hear the dogs running aimlessly about ahead of him, whining softly, not quite certain of their quarry.

Sir Halstead had paused for breath, when Dr. Davey caught up with him. "Massingham," he jerked out, "look at this."

He had a flashlight and he turned this on the paper that fluttered in his hand. Sir Halstead saw that the paper was quite yellow with its age, but the writing was still clear. He read silently:

> "On Ye Knoll this year, 1727, hath Ye Lord of Furnival, Guy James, condemned and hanged one Hamish Inness, for poaching, who, dying, pronounced this curse upon ye line of Furnival: Thy line shall pass in ye seventh generation, when I shall come unto him in this generation in his thirty-seventh year and hang him here upon this tree. This by Ye Branches of Ye Inverted Cross, by Ye arm of this Gallows-tree, and by Ye all-knowing Trinity."

"Where did you find this?" asked Sir Halstead, when he had finished.

"In the library. Right among all those papers he'd been using for his book." He took a deep breath. "What do you think?" he asked.

"Nothing. I don't want to think," snapped Sir Halstead.

"But, Massingham, the shadow on the sky—the gallows-tree—the man hanging—then this. And James is in his thirty-seventh year!"

Whatever Sir Halstead might have said was cut off by the sudden baying and howling of the dogs in the distance, at a point to which the bobbing lanterns of the searchers were slowly converging.

"They've found him," shouted Dr. Davey, and he was off. Sir Halstead was not far behind.

Their passage over the fens was necessarily slow, but after some minutes, the men got there. Sir Hilary James was lying face downward in the long grass on a small knoll that rose out of the marshy land.

"Has anyone touched him?" asked Sir Halstead.

There was a unanimous shaking of heads.

"Who found him?"

"The hounds, sir. They made for Gallows Point right off."

There was a sharp exclamation from Dr. Davey, and a muttered repetition, "Gallows Point!"

Sir Halstead affected not to notice, and went on. "Dogs strike a trail?"

"No; the wind, sir. Seems there was no trail, sir."

Sir Halstead nodded and bent to examine the body. He looked up after a second, his face yellow in the lantern light. "Heart failure," he said dully. "Someone go for a stretcher."

"Already gone, sir," said one of the servants.

"Very well; we'll wait here. No one touch him, please."

"Dead, is 'e, sir?" came a quavering voice from the small knot of servants.

Sir Halstead nodded.

When the improvised stretcher came, Sir Halstead and Dr. Davey carefully arranged the body of Sir Hilary on it. Then the servants took it up and went ahead; the two specialists walked a short distance behind.

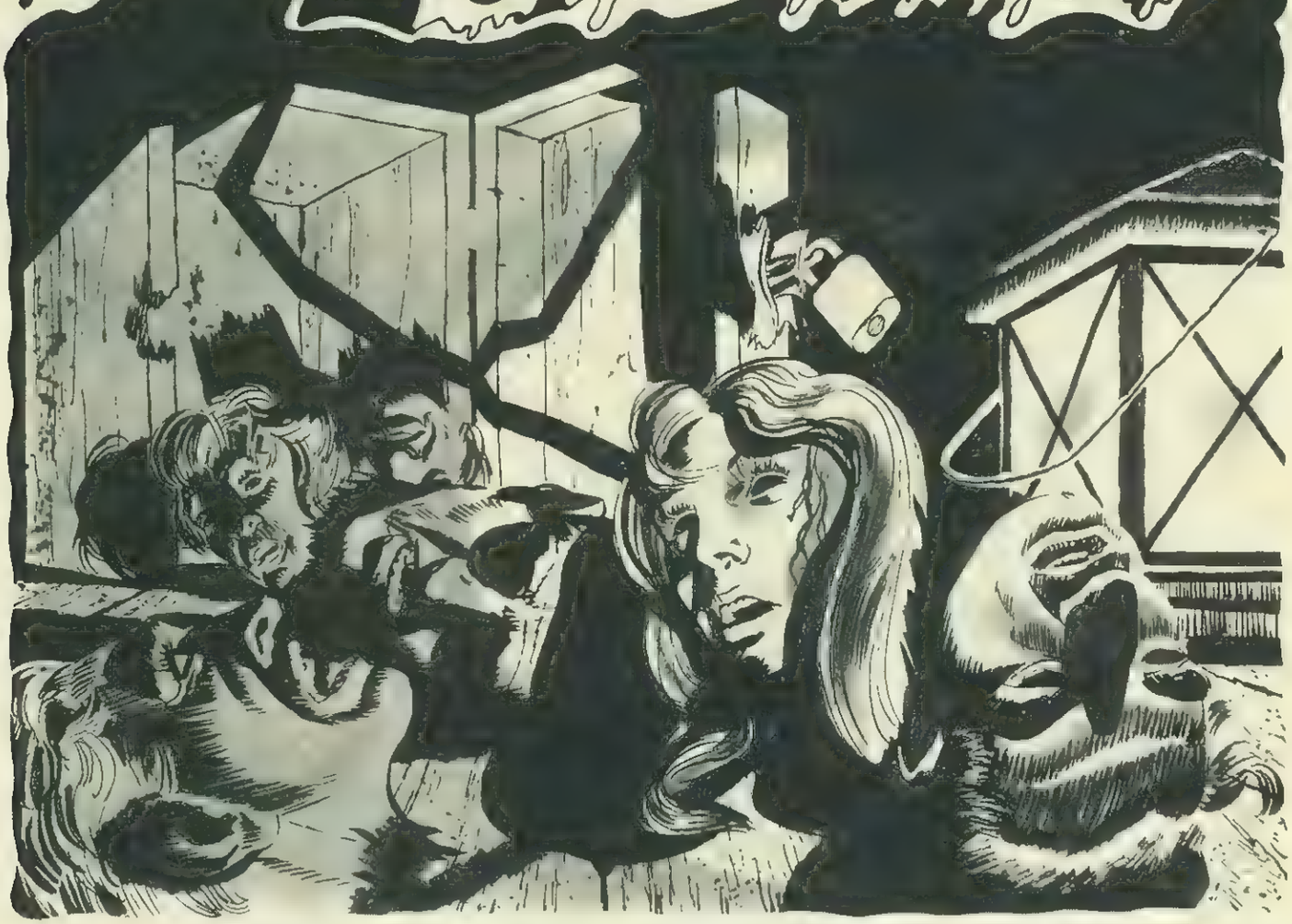
"What are we to do?" asked Dr. Davey.

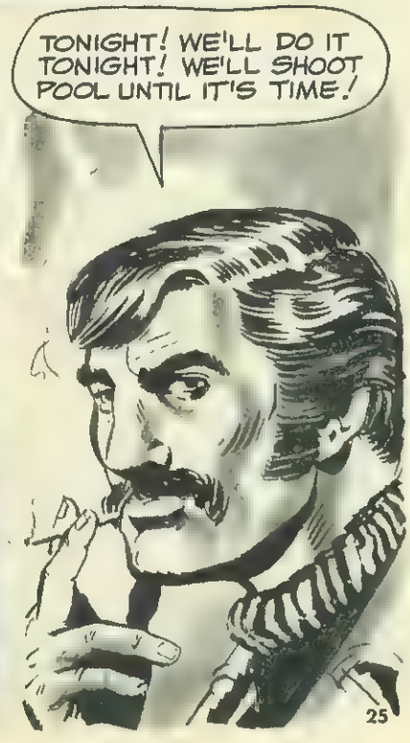
Sir Halstead took a deep breath. "This is the very first time that I am glad of my prestige, and yours, Davey. We must do all in our power to prevent an examination of the body. We shall have to call in the necessary officials, but I am sure they will take our statements at face value. Sir Hilary James ran out upon the fens during treatment for his heart. Here his heart gave out. That must be the substance of our statement. Under no conditions must we allow anyone to see his neck."

"His neck!" exclaimed Dr. Davey in surprise.

Sir Halstead grasped his companion's wrist in a vise-like grip. "Be more discreet, Doctor. Mr. James' neck is broken, and there is a mark there. **The man has been hanged!"** ●

HOUSE OF BLOOD!





LATER...
FINISH UP THE GAME, DANNY-- WE'LL GET TO WORK!
STILL ANOTHER HEADLESS CORPSE HAS BEEN FOUND! THIS MAKES THE SIX VICTIM OF THE OF THE SAVAGE KILLER HAS BEEN ON A RAMPAGE
OKAY!

I GET THE WILLIES LISTENING TO THAT STUFF!
DON'T PAY ATTENTION TO IT--WE'LL BE ON EASY STREET SOON!
THE LATEST VICTIM IS A WOMAN IN HER TWENTIES! THE POLICE DRAGNET IS NOW BEING SET UP!

THE TWO YOUTHS MAKE THEIR WAY TOWARDS THE JUNKMAN'S SHACK THROUGH THE SORDID SLUMS OF THE CITY, OUT BY THE DUMPS...
AAAA! WHAT WAS THAT?
ONLY A RAT, THAT'S ALL! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?

I-I'M JUMPY--ALL THAT TALK ABOUT THE BODIES GOT ON MY NERVES! MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T DO THIS!
YOU'RE TURNING CHICKEN--I GOT WAYS OF HANDLING GUYS LIKE YOU!

THIS'LL STRAIGHTEN YOU OUT!
CHHH!

DANNY! COME ON! WAKE UP! I DIDN'T MEAN TO HIT YOU HARD! DANNY-- HE'S DEAD!

SO IT WAS AN ACCIDENT-- DANNY SHOULDN'T HAVE TURNED YELLOW! NOW-- I'LL HAVE ALL THE DOUGH MYSELF--I'LL COVER HIM! THEY'LL NEVER FIND HIM!

SOON, CHET ENTERS THE SHACK---
AH, THERE'S THE TRUNK! DARK IN HERE... BETTER LIGHT THE LAMP!

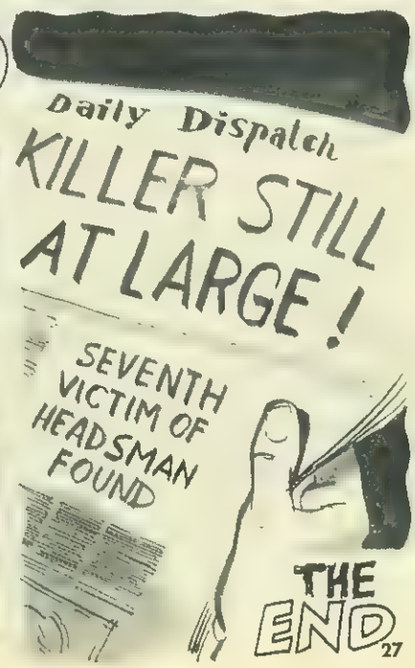
ANOTHER COUPLE OF SECONDS AND I'LL HAVE IT!

THERE'S ANOTHER BOX IN HERE-- THE MONEY'S IN HERE I'LL BET...

IT'S OPENING!
CRIIICK! CRIIIK!

YAAAAAA!

WELL, LAD--SO YOU FOUND MY TREASURE, EH? YOU'LL MAKE A FINE SPECIMEN FOR MY COLLECTION!
NO! PLEASE! NO! NO!

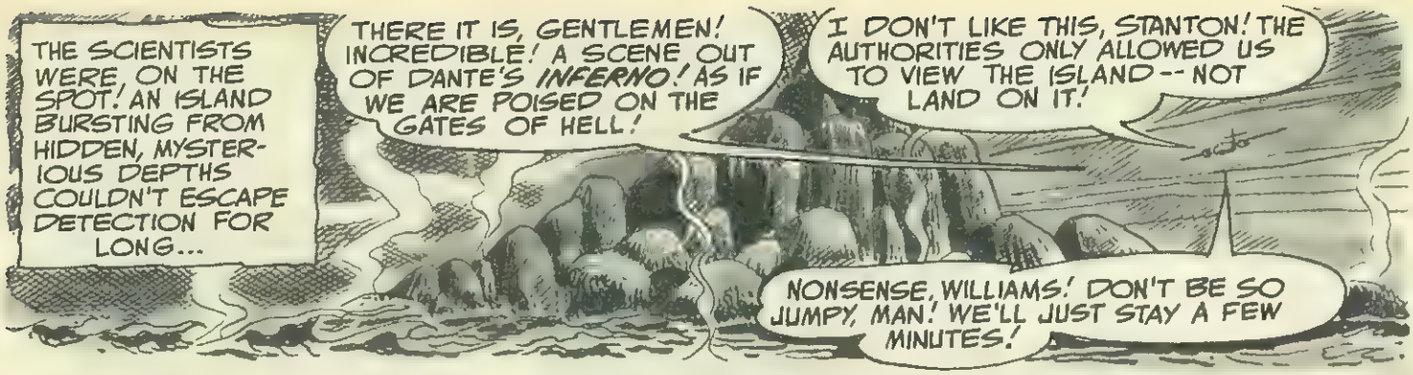

Daily Dispatch
KILLER STILL AT LARGE!
SEVENTH VICTIM OF HEADSMAN FOUND
THE END

SOME PEOPLE WHO VISIT GRAVES LEAVE FLOWERS....BUT FOR THIS ONE YOU NEED SOMETHING ALIVE! AFTER ALL, WE'RE NOT SURE ABOUT HIM! CARE TO STICK AROUND? HMMM?
Strange Facts
COUNT DRACULA
--THE LAST CORPSE TO ENTER A CEMETARY MUST GUARD THE OTHER GRAVES!...PSST..THIS CEMETARY WAS ABANDONED IN 1800... HMMM?!
A SPIDER THAT DROPS ON YOUR FACE WILL BRING GOOD LUCK, —THIS MAN BELIEVED,—BUT, HE DIED KNOWN ONLY AS "HARD-LUCK" JOHN.

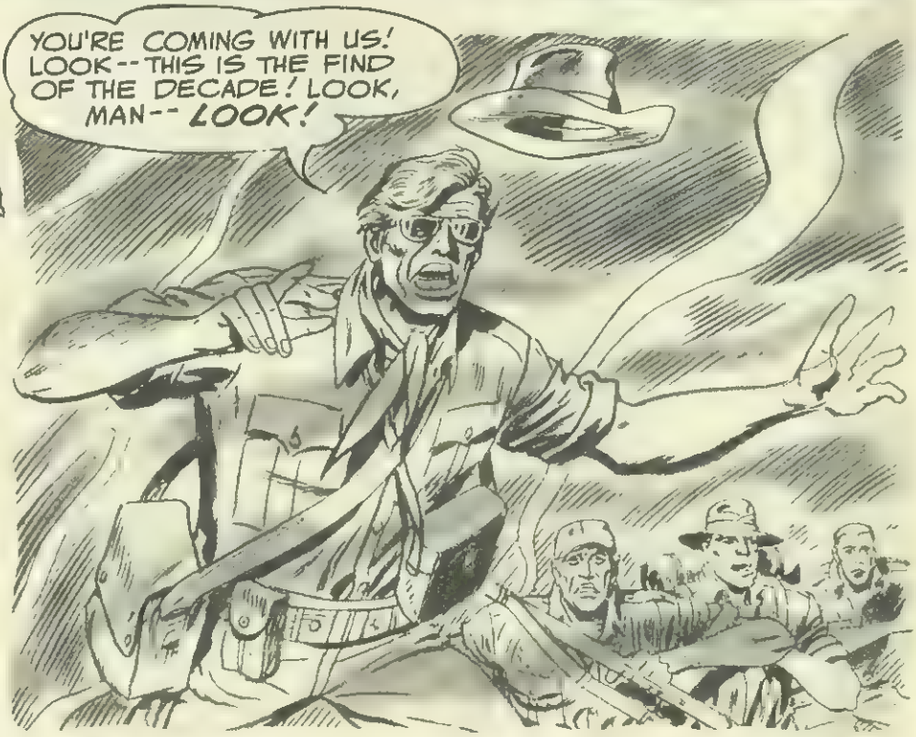
ONE MOMENT WHILE I PLUNGE THIS PIN INTO THE WAX IMAGE...AH, THERE,–IT'S DONE!
OF COURSE, 5000 MILES AWAY, A MAN WILL CRINGE WITH PAIN! BUT, THAT IS VOODOO! NOW WELCOME TO VOODOO SUPERSTITIONS ...DID YOU KNOW--
THAT THE FIRST CORPSE LAID IN A NEW CHURCHYARD, IS CLAIMED BY THE DEVIL! (...ER-- BE MY GUEST,–YOU FIRST!)
TO DREAM OF A LIZARD, MEANS THAT YOU HAVE A SECRET ENEMY!
IF A FLY FALLS INTO A GLASS FROM WHICH YOU ARE DRINKING, IT IS AN OMEN OF PROSPERITY (AND I ALWAYS THOUGHT IT WAS A BARFLYS TRICK TO GET A FREE ONE!)

A RUMBLING THUNDER SHOOK THE COOL, GREEN-BLUE WATER AND REGURGITATED THE MURKY FROTH INTO STINGING SPRAY. AND OUT OF ITS BUBBLING DEPTHS ROSE THE HORRIBLE VOLCANIC INFERNO THAT HAD COME TO CLAIM NEW VICTIMS LURING THEM TO THE...

ISLE OF DEMONS


THE SCIENTISTS WERE ON THE SPOT! AN ISLAND BURSTING FROM HIDDEN, MYSTERIOUS DEPTHS COULDN'T ESCAPE DETECTION FOR LONG...
THERE IT IS, GENTLEMEN! INCREDIBLE! A SCENE OUT OF DANTE'S *INFERNO*! AS IF WE ARE POISED ON THE GATES OF HELL!
I DON'T LIKE THIS, STANTON! THE AUTHORITIES ONLY ALLOWED US TO VIEW THE ISLAND -- NOT LAND ON IT!
NONSENSE, WILLIAMS! DON'T BE SO JUMPY, MAN! WE'LL JUST STAY A FEW MINUTES!

MOMENTS LATER, THE PLANE LANDED AND THE SCIENTIFIC GROUP MADE PREPARATIONS TO EXPLORE THE NEWLY-BORN ISLAND! AS THE FOUL-SMELLING VAPORS ISSUED FORTH, THE SENSE OF MYSTERY DEEPENED...
IT'S WRONG, STANTON! I HAVE A STRANGE PREMONITION!
DON'T BE A FOOL! I GIVE THE ORDERS HERE!


YOU'RE COMING WITH US! LOOK -- THIS IS THE FIND OF THE DECADE! LOOK, MAN -- *LOOK!*

AND THERE... THEN... THEY SAW THE *TOWER!*
GOOD LORD! WHO WOULD EVER BELIEVE IT? IT'S SOME SORT OF BUILDING SUNK INTO THIS BLACKENED MUD AND SLUDGE!
--A LOST CIVILIZATION THAT MIGHT GIVE US A CLUE TO MANKIND'S ORIGIN!

BUT AS THEY TALKED IN AWE... AN OMINOUS SOUND MADE THEM WHIRL AROUND IN HORROR...
AIIE! THE PLANE... IT'S SINKING INTO THE MUD! *HELP!*
TOO LATE! STAY BACK OR WE'LL BE SUCKED INTO THAT QUAGMIRE, TOO!

WE SHOULDN'T HAVE LANDED! I TOLD YOU! OHHH... WE'LL ALL DIE HERE!
NO ONE'S GOING TO DIE, WILLIAMS! SNAP OUT OF IT! THE AUTHORITIES KNOW WE'RE HERE! THEY'LL SEND A RESCUE PLANE WITHIN THE HOUR!

WELL... WHAT SHALL WE DO? WE'RE STRANDED HERE!
USE YOUR HEAD! THIS WILL GIVE US A CHANCE TO EXPLORE FURTHER! FOLLOW ME!

BUT AS THE MEN APPROACHED, A DARK SHADOW OF HORRIBLE MEANING SLUNK DEEPER INTO THE BLACKNESS OF THE DRIPPING WALLS...
WILLIAMS MIGHT BE RIGHT, STANTON! THERE'S AN AIR OF BROODING THAT HANGS OVER THIS PLACE! HEAVEN KNOWS HOW LONG THIS ISLAND HAS BEEN UNDER WATER!
LOOK... THERE'S ANOTHER CHAMBER INSIDE!

GREAT SCOTT! GOLD!
GOLD! HA-HA... WE'RE RICH! THE IDOLS... THE DECORATIONS... THEY'RE ALL GOLD! THERE'S MILLIONS HERE... MILLIONS!
BUT WHY, STANTON? WHY IS THIS TOWER HERE? WHAT IS IT? WHO WERE THE PEOPLE WHO BUILT IT?
THAT'S NOT IN OUR PROVINCE TO FIND OUT! WE'RE ONLY RESPONSIBLE FOR DISCOVERING IT... AND THE TREASURE! LET THE ARCHEOLOGISTS DIG OUT THE SECRETS!

ALL I'M INTERESTED IN IS HOW MUCH GOLD IS HERE...
AND IF THERE'S MORE OF IT! THIS IDOL FOR INSTANCE ...IT'S SOLID GOLD!

NO SOONER HAD STANTON CRUSHED THE IDOL TO PIECES, A STRANGE, THROBBING SOUND, FOLLOWED BY AN EERIE WAILING ISSUED FORTH FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE TOWER...
OOOOEEEOOEEH! THEY HAVE BLASPHEMED AGAINST US! RISE, BROTHERS, RISE! OOOOEEEOOEEH!

OOOOEEEOOEEH! THEY HAVE DESTROYED OUR OFFERINGS TO THE TOWER! THEY HAVE CURSED OUR FATES! LET THEM JOIN US NOW-- IN ETERNAL MISERY!

YA-A-A!! LET ME OUT OF HERE!

W-WHAT ARE THEY? I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS IN MY LIFE!

DEVILS FROM THE DEEP-- THAT'S WHAT THEY ARE! DON'T YOU KNOW WHERE **WE** ARE? THE INSCRIPTIONS... THE DECORATIONS... WE'RE IN THE *TOWER OF BABEL!*

NOW THE MEN HAD BUT ONE THOUGHT... TO FLEE FROM THE NIGHTMARISH SCOURGE THAT PURSUED THEM... FLEE FOR THEIR VERY LIVES!

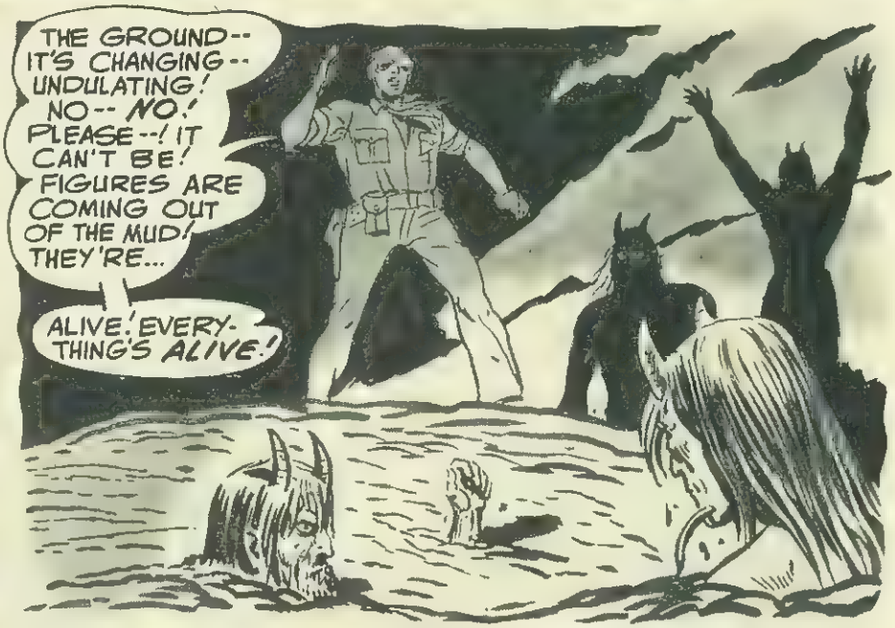
OOOOEEEOOEEH! HASTEN, BROTHERS! BEHOLD! ONE STUMBLES! GOOD-- HE SHALL JOIN US!

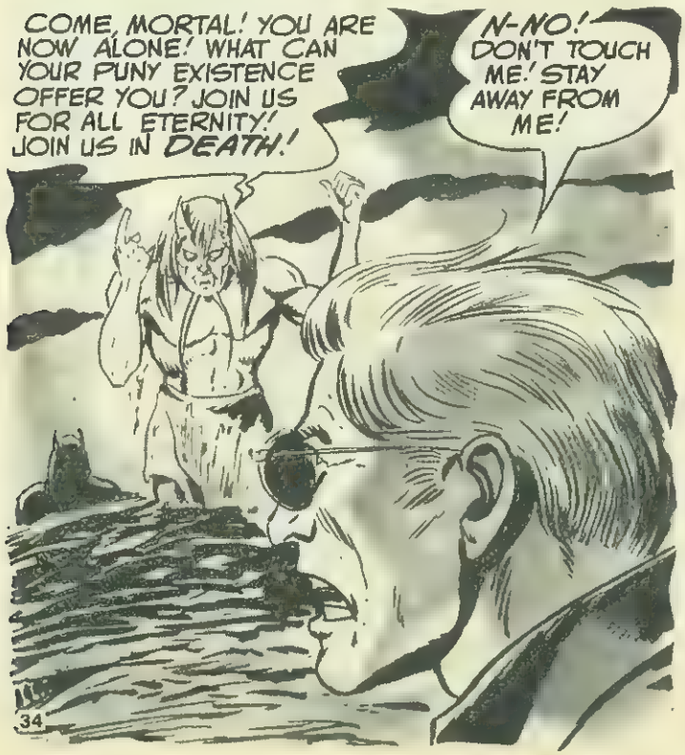
A-E-E-E-E!

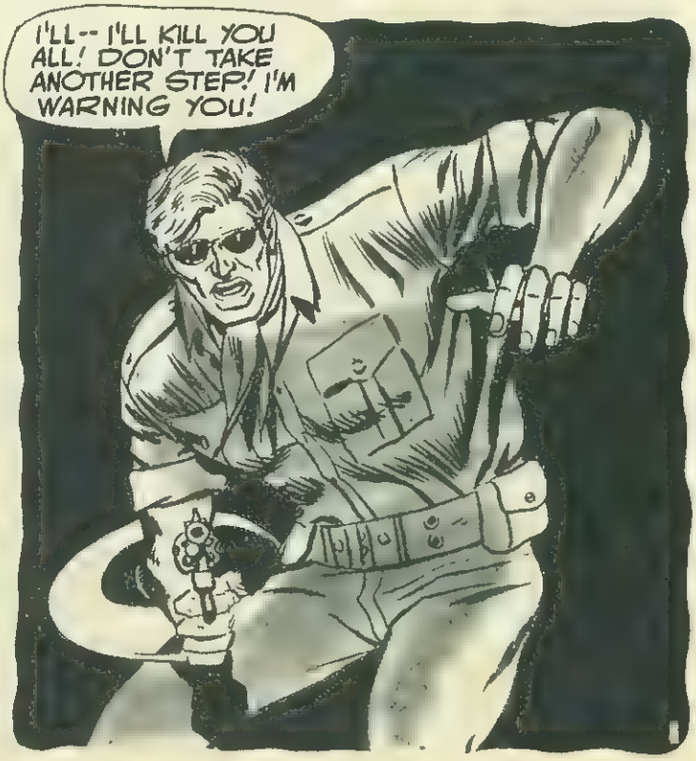
YAAAGGHH!
COME, MORTAL! YOU ARE NOW ONE OF US! WELCOME, WELCOME INTO OUR FOLD!

AAAARRRGGH! THE GROUND'S OPENING UP UNDER ME! AAIIEEEE!

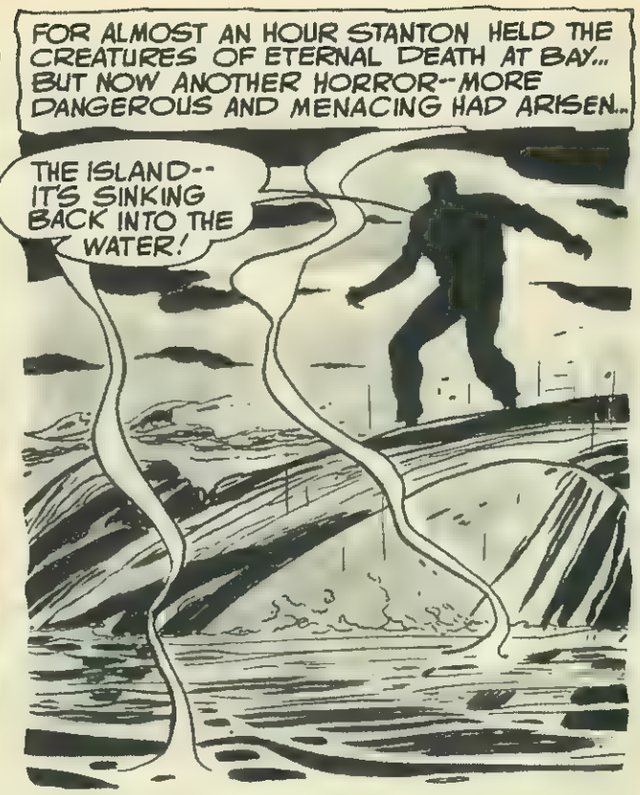
ONLY STANTON WAS LEFT! GASPING, PANTING, HE EMERGED FROM THE TOWER--TOO FRIGHTENED TO THINK--TOO TERRIFIED TO REMAIN...
GASP, GASP... I'M FREE! MADE IT! HA, HA... I'M FREE! THEY'LL NEVER FOLLOW ME OUT HERE! WILLIAMS, BARLOW, EVANS--ALL GONE! ONLY I'M LEFT...


THE GROUND--IT'S CHANGING--UNDULATING! NO--NO! PLEASE--! IT CAN'T BE! FIGURES ARE COMING OUT OF THE MUD! THEY'RE...
ALIVE! EVERYTHING'S ALIVE!

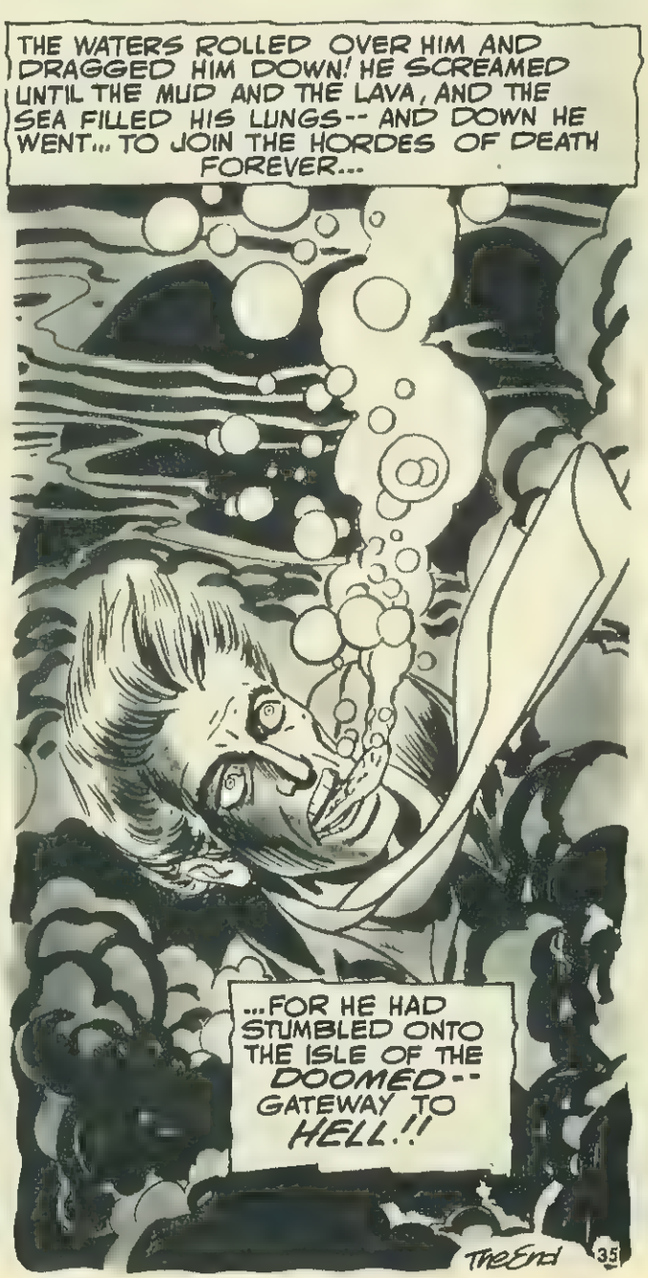

COME, MORTAL! YOU ARE NOW ALONE! WHAT CAN YOUR PUNY EXISTENCE OFFER YOU? JOIN US FOR ALL ETERNITY! JOIN US IN DEATH!
N-NO! DON'T TOUCH ME! STAY AWAY FROM ME!


I'LL--I'LL KILL YOU ALL! DON'T TAKE ANOTHER STEP! I'M WARNING YOU!

AAARRGH!
HA... HA! SO YOU CAN BE HURT! GOOD! I'VE GOT OVER A DOZEN ROUNDS OF AMMUNITION! I'LL KILL YOU ALL! STAY BACK!


FOR ALMOST AN HOUR STANTON HELD THE CREATURES OF ETERNAL DEATH AT BAY... BUT NOW ANOTHER HORROR--MORE DANGEROUS AND MENACING HAD ARISEN...
THE ISLAND-- IT'S SINKING BACK INTO THE WATER!

YOU UNDERSTAND NOW, MORTAL? YOU CANNOT CONQUER THE UNKNOWN! YOUR PUNY WEAPONS HAVE ONLY PROLONGED THE INEVITABLE! WELCOME NOW! WELCOME!
YAAAAH!

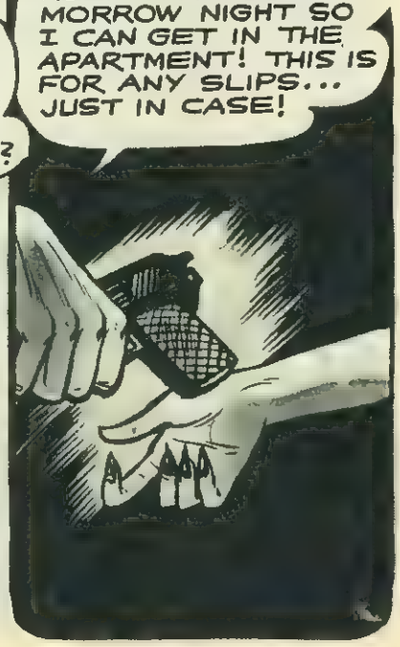

THE WATERS ROLLED OVER HIM AND DRAGGED HIM DOWN! HE SCREAMED UNTIL THE MUD AND THE LAVA, AND THE SEA FILLED HIS LUNGS-- AND DOWN HE WENT... TO JOIN THE HORDES OF DEATH FOREVER...
...FOR HE HAD STUMBLED ONTO THE ISLE OF THE DOOMED-- GATEWAY TO HELL!!
The End

The SHELF of SKULLS

MUTED MURDER THROBBING LIKE A PRIMITIVE DRUM OFFERS A HAUNTING DIRGE AS AN EERIE TALE OF DEATH COMES IN BROKEN WHISPERS FROM THE **SHELF OF SKULLS!**

IT STARTED ON A DARK, DISMAL NIGHT, IN LOWER MANHATTAN...

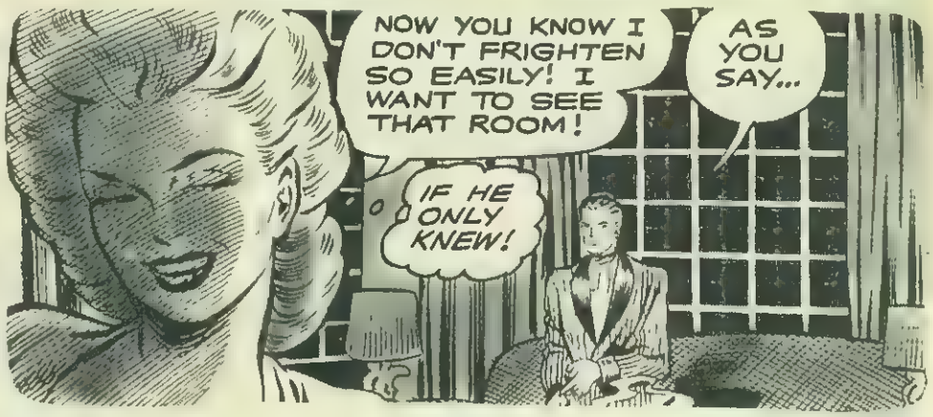
LATER, AS DON CALMS CELIA'S FEARS . . .



THE FOLLOWING NIGHT...
CELIA, DARLING! THOUGHT YOU WERE NEVER COMING!
DIFFICULT TO GET A CAB! SUCH A NIGHT! REGULAR STORM BLOWING!

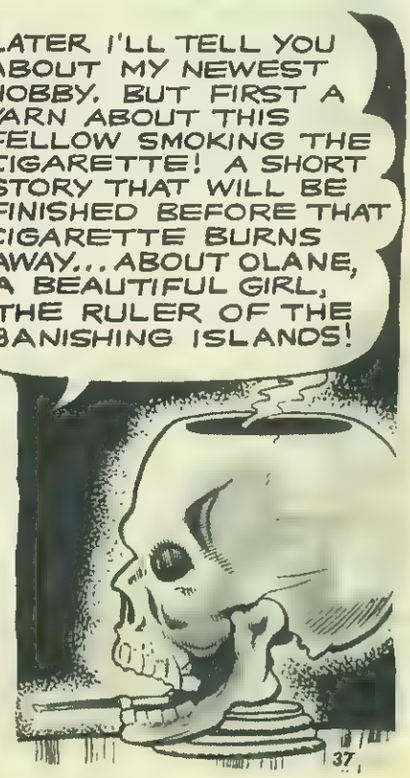
BUT IT'S SNUG AND WARM IN HERE. LET'S STAY HOME!
OHH! PLANNED IT HIMSELF! COULDN'T BE BETTER! NOW TO KEEP HIM OCCUPIED SO HE WON'T HEAR DON ENTER!

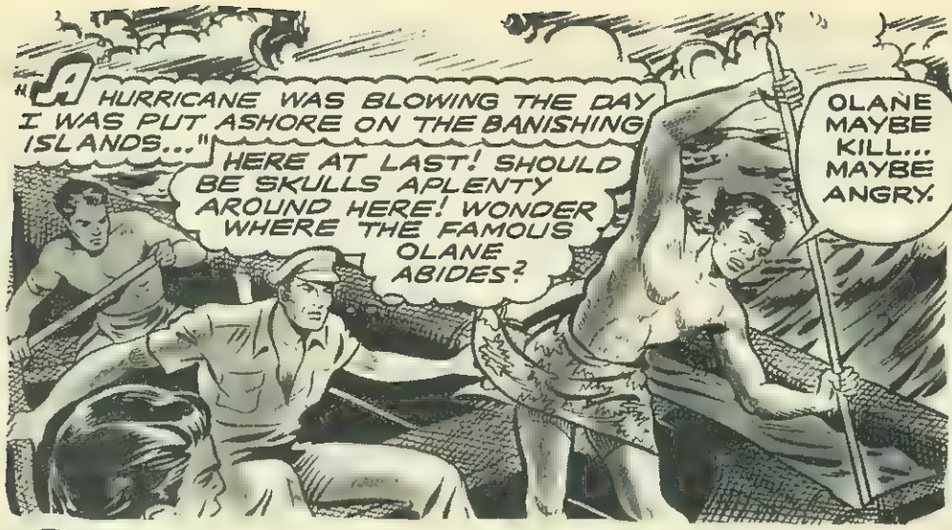
REMEMBER YOUR PROMISE THAT ONE DAY YOU'D SHOW ME THIS ROOM? TONIGHT WOULD BE A SWELL TIME!
YOU MAY THINK SO... BUT PERHAPS IT WOULD FRIGHTEN YOU.


NOW YOU KNOW I DON'T FRIGHTEN SO EASILY! I WANT TO SEE THAT ROOM!
AS YOU SAY...
IF HE ONLY KNEW!

MARK TRENT OPENS A DOOR AND AS THE OILED HINGES SWING BACK...
OHH! THOSE SKULLS! DOZENS OF THEM...

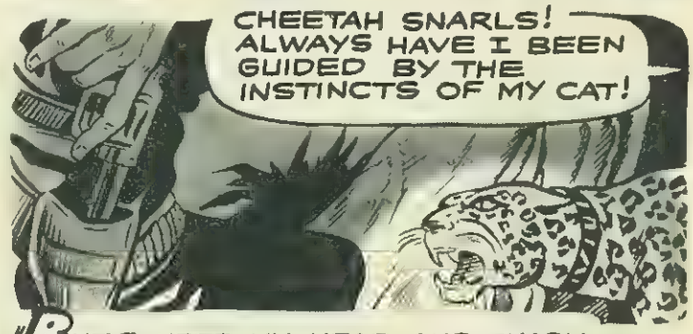
YOU WANTED TO SEE, AND NOW YOU HAVE! MY HOBBY! SKULLS FROM THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD OVER!


LATER I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT MY NEWEST HOBBY. BUT FIRST A YARN ABOUT THIS FELLOW SMOKING THE CIGARETTE! A SHORT STORY THAT WILL BE FINISHED BEFORE THAT CIGARETTE BURNS AWAY... ABOUT OLANE, A BEAUTIFUL GIRL, THE RULER OF THE BANISHING ISLANDS!


"A HURRICANE WAS BLOWING THE DAY I WAS PUT ASHORE ON THE BANISHING ISLANDS..."
HERE AT LAST! SHOULD BE SKULLS APLENTY AROUND HERE! WONDER WHERE THE FAMOUS OLANE ABIDES?
OLANE MAYBE KILL... MAYBE ANGRY.

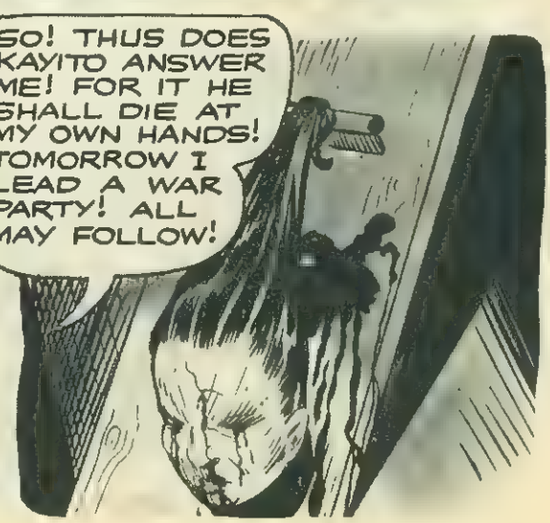
FOOL! DON'T YOU KNOW I HAVE A WAY WITH WOMEN?
IS SO?

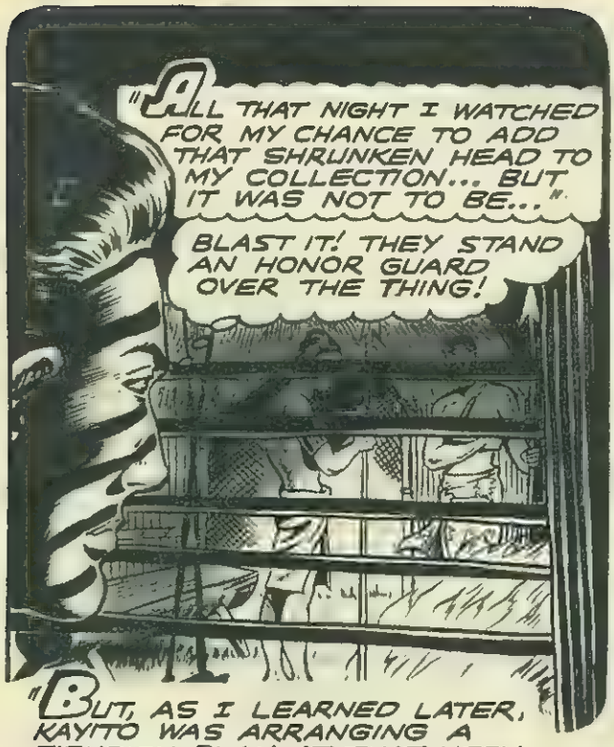
BUT... WHO ARE YOU, STRANGER?
WAH! IT IS THE GREAT ONE!
SO IT IS! NOT LEGEND, BUT REAL FLESH! AND THAT GREAT CAT...

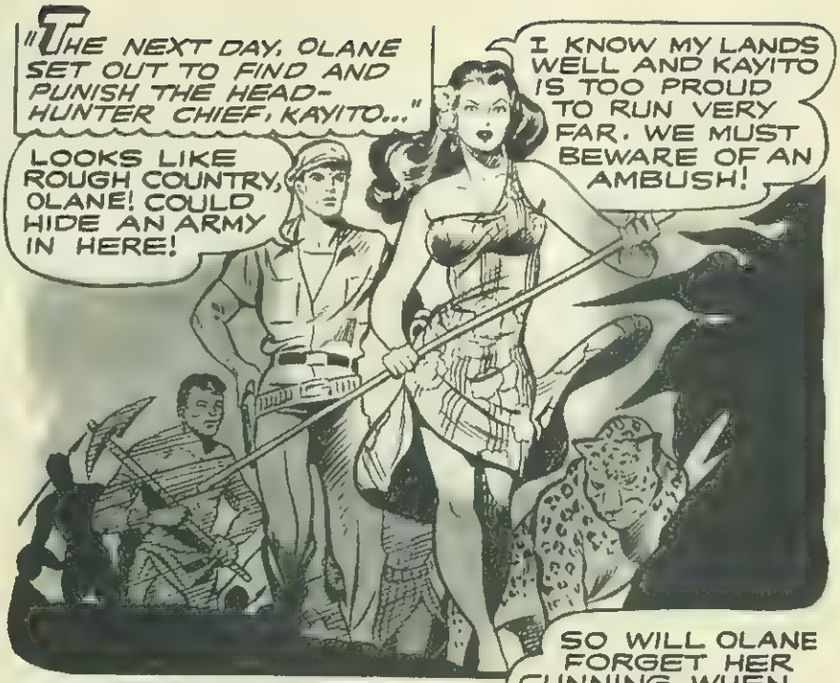

CHEETAH SNARLS! ALWAYS HAVE I BEEN GUIDED BY THE INSTINCTS OF MY CAT!

"BUT I USED MY HEAD AND CHARM AND WON HER OVER... THAT NIGHT THERE WAS A FEAST..."
COME, OLANE, WE'RE FRIENDS! DON'T YOU TRUST ME YET?
I KNOW NOT. MY HEAD AND HEART SPEAK IN DIFFERENT VOICES!

"BEFORE I COULD FIGURE OUT THIS STRANGE REPLY, THERE WAS A SUDDEN OUTCRY, AND..."
AHEE! N'BA'S HEAD! SHRUNKEN!
OLANE! KAYITO, THE HUNTER OF HEADS SENDS YOU THE HEAD OF YOUR MESSENGER!
OLANE WILL AVENGE THIS EVIL!


SO! THUS DOES KAYITO ANSWER ME! FOR IT HE SHALL DIE AT MY OWN HANDS! TOMORROW I LEAD A WAR PARTY! ALL MAY FOLLOW!


"ALL THAT NIGHT I WATCHED FOR MY CHANCE TO ADD THAT SHRUNKEN HEAD TO MY COLLECTION... BUT IT WAS NOT TO BE..."
BLAST IT! THEY STAND AN HONOR GUARD OVER THE THING!


"THE NEXT DAY, OLANE SET OUT TO FIND AND PUNISH THE HEAD-HUNTER CHIEF, KAYITO..."
LOOKS LIKE ROUGH COUNTRY, OLANE! COULD HIDE AN ARMY IN HERE!
I KNOW MY LANDS WELL AND KAYITO IS TOO PROUD TO RUN VERY FAR. WE MUST BEWARE OF AN AMBUSH!

"BUT, AS I LEARNED LATER, KAYITO WAS ARRANGING A FIENDISH PLAN AT THAT VERY MOMENT..."
IT IS AS YOU SAID... OLANE COMES AGAINST US!
GOOD. SHE IS NOT STUPID, YET SHE WILL FALL INTO MY TRAP. BRING OUT THE CAPTURED MAIDENS...

COME, FAIR ONES! IT IS OUR CHIEF'S COMMAND THAT YOU LOSE YOUR HEADS!
SO WILL OLANE FORGET HER CUNNING WHEN SHE FINDS THE PATH MARKED WITH THE HEADS OF HER GIRL PEOPLE!
NO... HELP!

MUCH LATER...
IT IS DONE! HASTEN TO MARK THE TRAIL, AND WE LEAD OLANE TO HER DEATH!

SHE WILL FOLLOW... AND IN HER RAGE WILL FORGET TO BE CAUTIOUS!
TOO LONG HAS A WOMAN RULED US! OLANE MUST DIE!

SOON...

KAYITO DARES TOO MUCH! HE SLAYS MY PEOPLE AND BLAZES A TRAIL WITH THEM! HE CANNOT BE FAR AWAY... AND IF WE HURRY...
BUT, OLANE... AN AMBUSH...

SEE? CHEETAH HAS CAUGHT THE SCENT OF MY ENEMY! QUICKLY NOW...

"THE WILY KAYITO LOOSES A HERD OF WILD BOAR . . ."
SAVAGE PIGS! THIS IS MORE OF KAYITO'S DEVIL WORK!
UGH! HUNDREDS OF THE BRUTES!

KILL OLANE! BUT TAKE THE STRANGER AS A PRISONER! HIS HEAD WILL HANG IN MY HUT!
IT'S KAYITO! NOW WE WILL SEE WHO RULES THE ISLANDS!

"BUT I RECKONED WITHOUT OLANE... THOUGH SURPRISED, SHE FOUGHT LIKE A DEMON, AND SOON KAYITO CHANGED HIS PLANS..."
SHE DEFEATS US, BUT GRAB THE MAN! WE WILL CATCH HER ANOTHER DAY!

QUICKLY! TAKE HIM TO THE CONCEALED PLACE IN THE JUNGLE! SEE THAT NO HARM BEFALLS HIM!
HELP! SHE DOESN'T HEAR ME... OLANE — OLANE!

OLANE DID NOT REALIZE THE FULL EXTENT OF THE LOSSES IN MEN, INCLUDING MYSELF, UNTIL HER RETURN TO HER OWN VILLAGE... BUT UPON THE DISCOVERY SHE QUICKLY FORMULATED OTHER PLANS...
I DO NOT APPROVE OF YOU GOING OFF ALONE, CHILD, BUT MAY THE ISLAND GODS PROTECT YOU AND GUIDE YOUR DANGEROUS AMBITION!
THANK YOU, OLD ONE. OLANE BUT OBEYS A GRAVE DUTY...

I FELL INTO THEIR AMBUSH, BUT THIS TIME... WHAT IS IT, CHEETAH? SOMEONE NEAR? AFTER HIM, SILKY ONE!

BAH! THIS IS A USELESS VIGIL! OLANE RAN OFF... SHE IS BUT A MERE WOMAN AFTER ALL...WEAK AND FOOLISH...

WAHH...
WHERE KAYITO'S MEN LURK, HE IS BOUND TO BE CLOSE BY!

AND LATER, AS THE MOON ROSE...
THEY KNEW I WOULD COME TO RESCUE THE STRANGER, BUT THEY DO NOT EXPECT ME SO SOON... NOR ALONE!

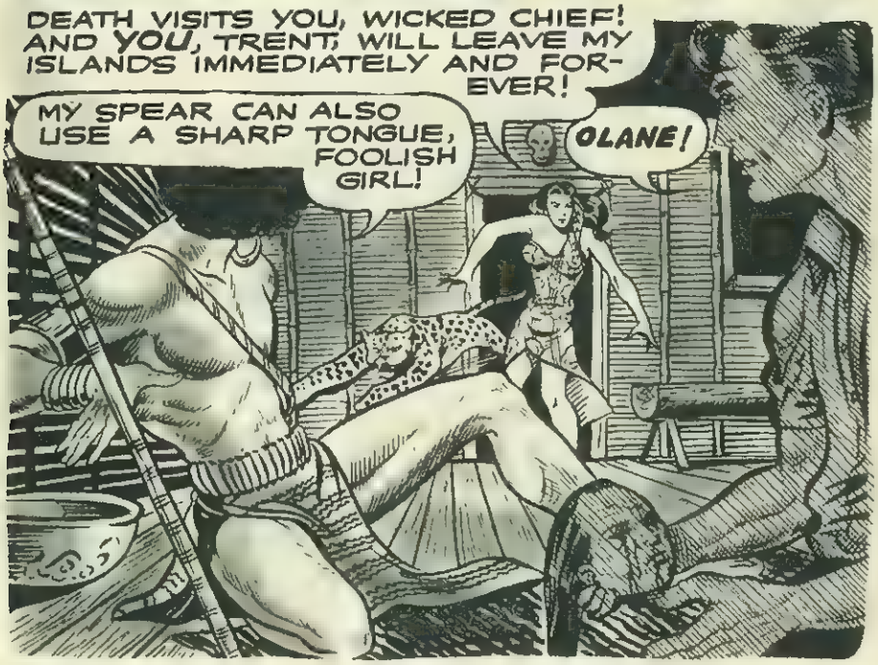
A LIGHT BECKONS... IT MAY BE ANOTHER TRAP. I MUST MOVE AS STEALTHILY AS CHEETAH...

TRENT! BUT WHAT IS THIS HE DOES? MY HEAD SPOKE TRUE WHEN IT WARNED MY HEART TO DISTRUST HIM!

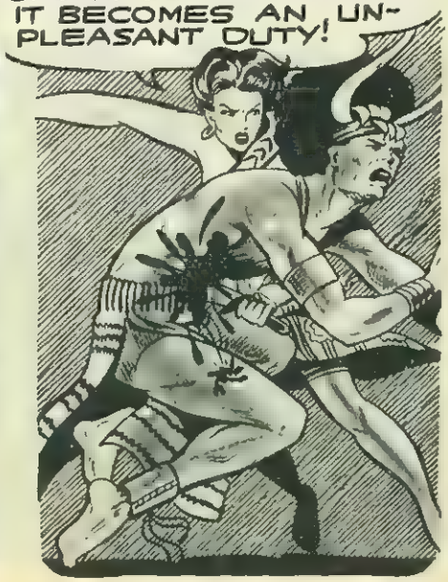
OLANE ARRIVED AT AN UNFORTUNATE TIME FOR ME...
MARVELOUS! SUCH WORKMANSHIP! HOW DO YOU DO IT?
I FANCY YOU, WHITE ONE. I WILL TELL YOU OF THIS AGE-OLD SECRET!

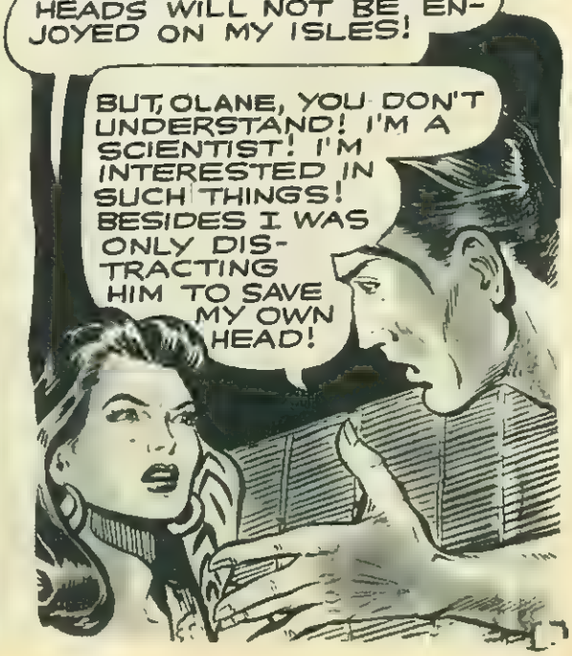
WILL YOU, REALLY? A LOST ART. BUT PERHAPS I WILL BECOME THE ONLY WHITE MAN TO BRING IT BACK! WHAT A HOBBY THIS WOULD MAKE!

I WAS MAD TO WELCOME SUCH A ONE TO MY ISLANDS! BUT STILL I MUST SAVE HIM... AND DESTROY THE OTHER MASTER OF EVIL!
AS FOR YOU... LEAVE! THE JOY YOU LOOKED FORWARD TO IN CURING HEADS WILL NOT BE ENJOYED ON MY ISLES!


DEATH VISITS YOU, WICKED CHIEF! AND YOU, TRENT, WILL LEAVE MY ISLANDS IMMEDIATELY AND FOREVER!
MY SPEAR CAN ALSO USE A SHARP TONGUE, FOOLISH GIRL!
OLANE!

BETRAY MY AIM, WILL YOU... I'LL KILL...

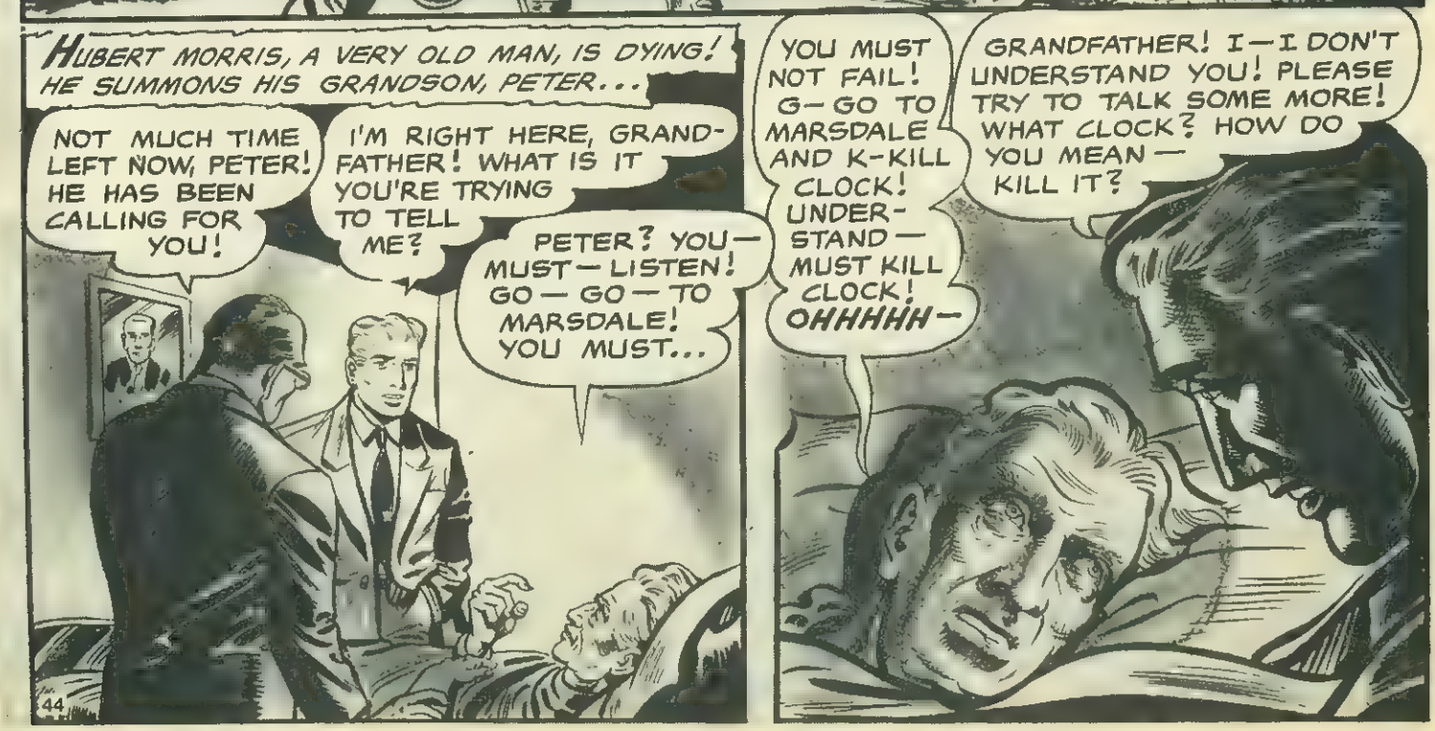

KILLING IS NOT OLANE'S FAVORED SPORT, BUT SOMETIMES IT BECOMES AN UNPLEASANT DUTY!

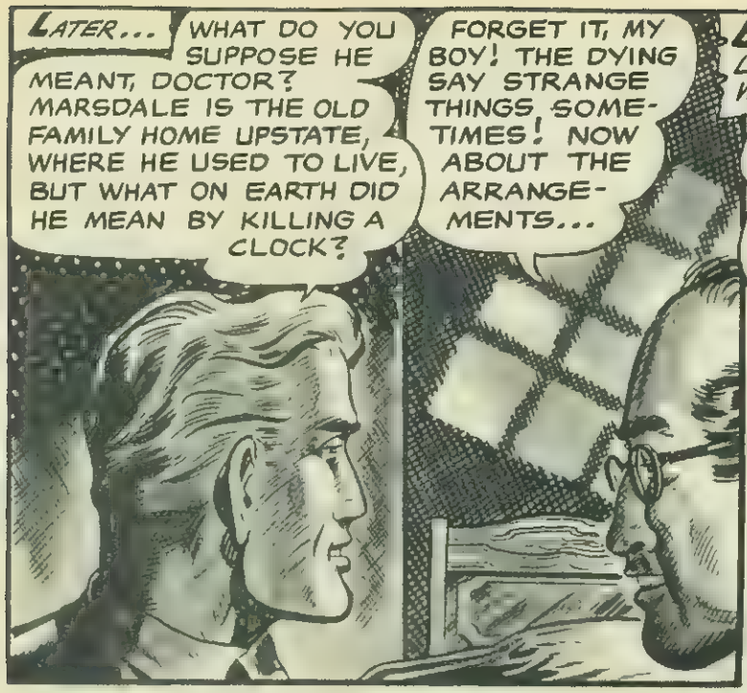

BUT, OLANE, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! I'M A SCIENTIST! I'M INTERESTED IN SUCH THINGS! BESIDES I WAS ONLY DISTRACTING HIM TO SAVE MY OWN HEAD!

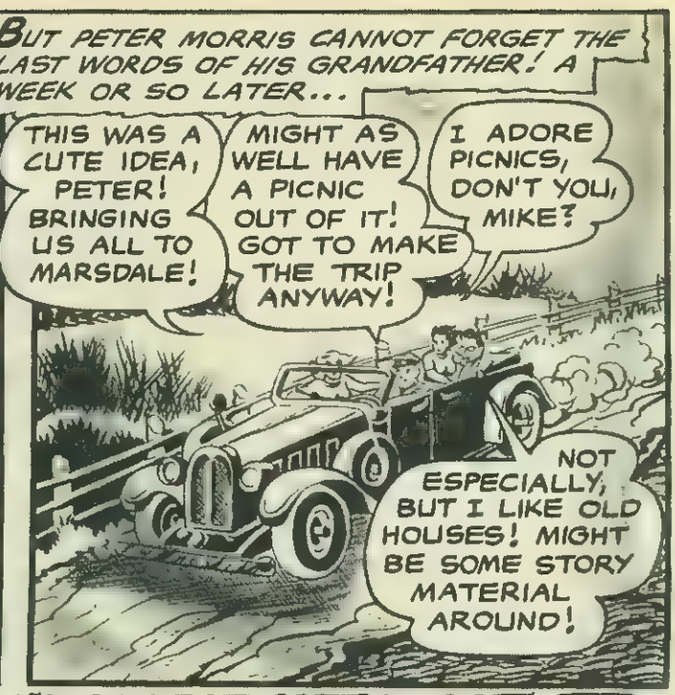
MARK TRENT FINISHED HIS STRANGE TALE...
YOU SEE... THE LENGTH OF ONE BURNING CIGARETTE TO TELL MY TALE. NO DOUBT YOU GUESSED... THIS IS KAYITO'S SKULL! OLANE LET ME HAVE IT FOR A PROMISE NEVER TO RETURN TO HER ISLANDS!
HOW HORRIBLE!
GETTING LATE! WHERE IS DON?
THAT OLANE WAS RIGHT! MARK IS CRUEL! I DON'T FEEL SO BADLY NOW... IF DON WOULD ONLY HURRY...
YOU'LL RECALL, MY DEAR, I SPOKE OF ANOTHER HOBBY! MY NEWEST! HERE IS SOMETHING THAT WILL INTEREST YOU...
YOU SEE I KNEW ALL ABOUT YOU AND DON! HAD YOU FOLLOWED OFTEN! KNEW YOU PLANNED KILLING ME FOR MY MONEY! HE... ER, WAS A HANDY SUBJECT FOR MY NEW HOBBY!
DON! YOU KILLED HIM! YOU DID THIS TO HIM! YOU BEAST!
OHH... MY BAG! THE GUN DON GAVE ME...
COME NOW, WOULD YOU HAVE SCREAMED SO FOR MY CORPSE AS YOU DO FOR DON'S HEAD?
MINUTES LATER A VOICE RASPS IN A RADIO CAR...
CAR 39... GO TO PINE TERRACE... SHOOTING IN APARTMENT J-2... HURRY...
AND...
WEIRD, ISN'T IT? FIGHTING OVER A LITTLE HEAD... WONDER WHO SHOT WHO? BOTH DEAD...
IT'S ONE OF THOSE THINGS NO ONE WILL KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT!
SO THEY'LL GUESS AND GUESS... BUT NEVER KNOW THE TRUTH... BUT YOU KNOW, DON'T YOU?.. OR DO YOU? AND SO THIS LITTLE TALE LIKE THE CIGARETTE, FADES AWAY INTO SMOKE...
THE END

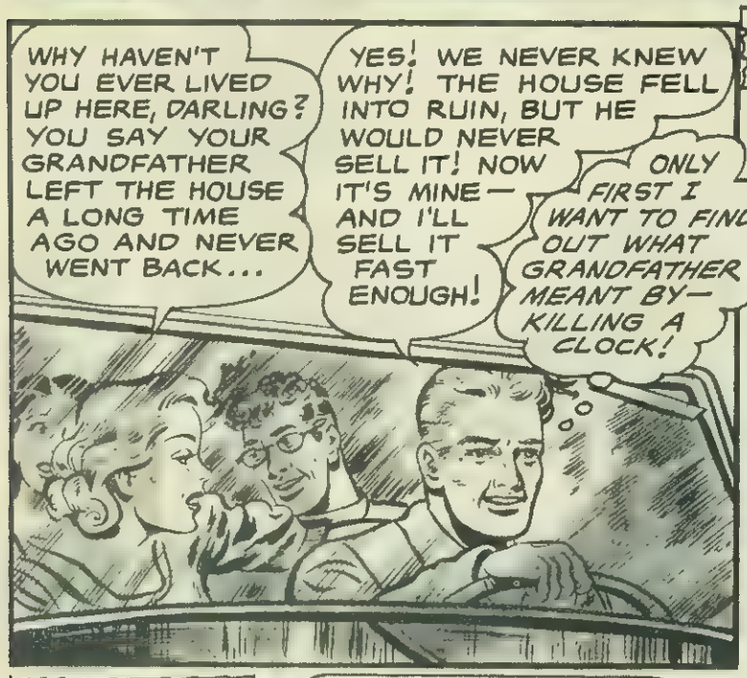
DEATH STRIKES FOUR

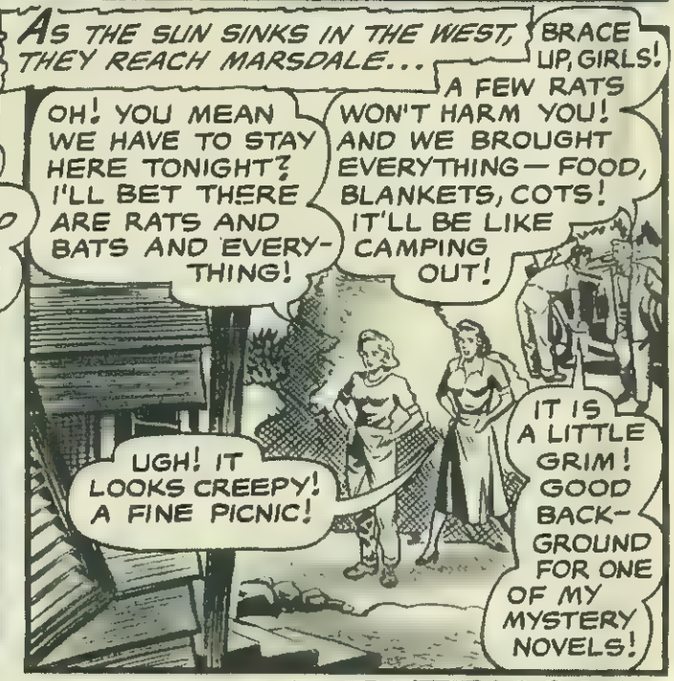
WHAT SPECIAL AND HORRIBLE KIND OF OIL WAS IT THAT MADE THE CLOCK RUN AFTER FIFTY YEARS OF RUST AND DECAY? WHY DID IT ALWAYS STRIKE THE WRONG HOUR? AND HOW, ABOVE ALL, DID THE DEMON CLOCK MANAGE TO MOVE FROM PLACE TO PLACE? WAS IT ALIVE? COULD IT THINK? COULD IT KILL? COME ALONG WITH THE FOUR UNFORTUNATES WHO FOUND OUT THE TRUTH ABOUT THE **CLOCK THAT WENT INSANE...**

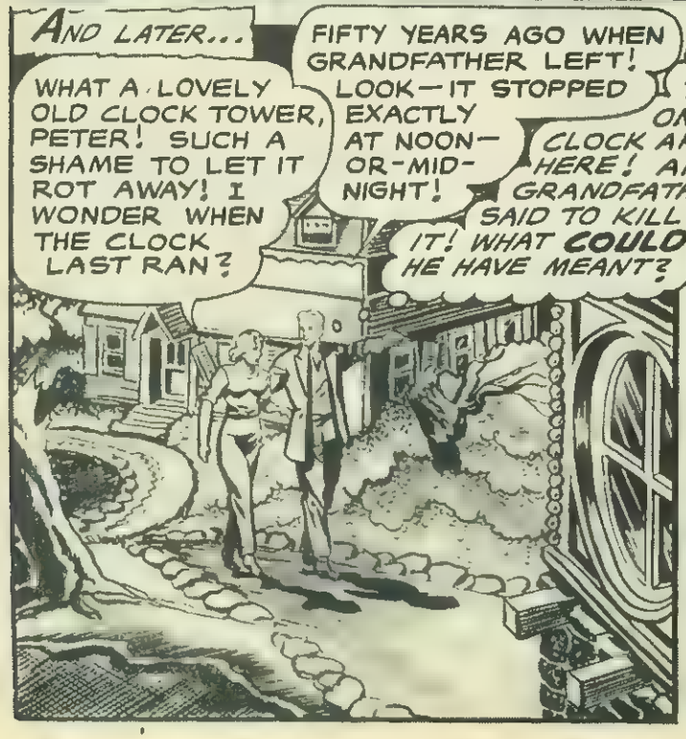



LATER...
WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE HE MEANT, DOCTOR? MARSDALE IS THE OLD FAMILY HOME UPSTATE, WHERE HE USED TO LIVE, BUT WHAT ON EARTH DID HE MEAN BY KILLING A CLOCK?
FORGET IT, MY BOY! THE DYING SAY STRANGE THINGS SOMETIMES! NOW ABOUT THE ARRANGEMENTS...


BUT PETER MORRIS CANNOT FORGET THE LAST WORDS OF HIS GRANDFATHER! A WEEK OR SO LATER...
THIS WAS A CUTE IDEA, PETER! BRINGING US ALL TO MARSDALE!
MIGHT AS WELL HAVE A PICNIC OUT OF IT! GOT TO MAKE THE TRIP ANYWAY!
I ADORE PICNICS, DON'T YOU, MIKE?
NOT ESPECIALLY, BUT I LIKE OLD HOUSES! MIGHT BE SOME STORY MATERIAL AROUND!

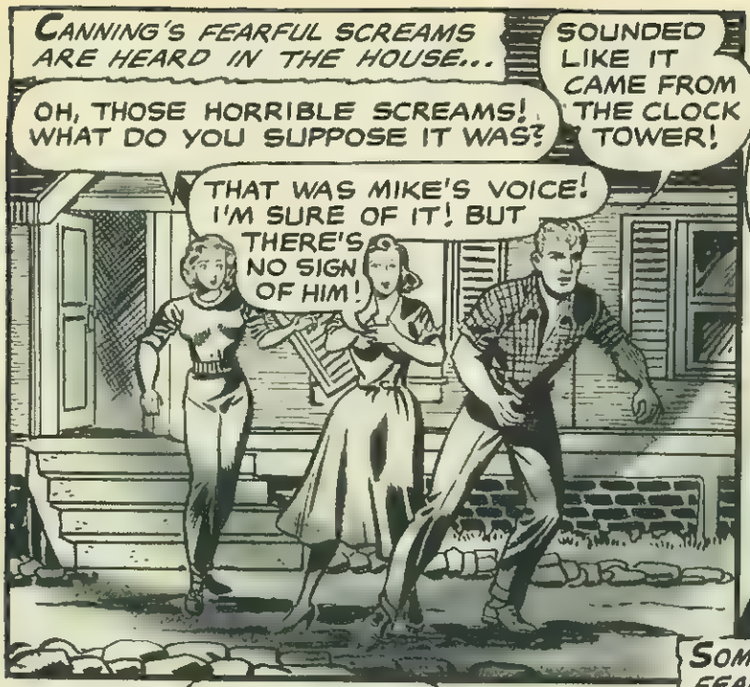

WHY HAVEN'T YOU EVER LIVED UP HERE, DARLING? YOU SAY YOUR GRANDFATHER LEFT THE HOUSE A LONG TIME AGO AND NEVER WENT BACK...
YES! WE NEVER KNEW WHY! THE HOUSE FELL INTO RUIN, BUT HE WOULD NEVER SELL IT! NOW IT'S MINE— AND I'LL SELL IT FAST ENOUGH!
ONLY FIRST I WANT TO FIND OUT WHAT GRANDFATHER MEANT BY— KILLING A CLOCK!

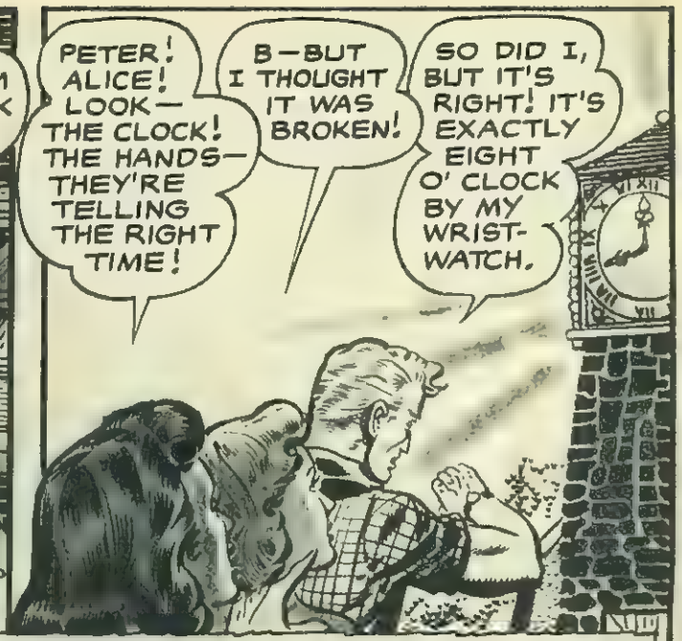

AS THE SUN SINKS IN THE WEST, THEY REACH MARSDALE...
BRACE UP, GIRLS!
OH! YOU MEAN WE HAVE TO STAY HERE TONIGHT? I'LL BET THERE ARE RATS AND BATS AND EVERYTHING!
A FEW RATS WON'T HARM YOU! AND WE BROUGHT EVERYTHING— FOOD, BLANKETS, COTS! IT'LL BE LIKE CAMPING OUT!
UGH! IT LOOKS CREEPY! A FINE PICNIC!
IT IS A LITTLE GRIM! GOOD BACKGROUND FOR ONE OF MY MYSTERY NOVELS!

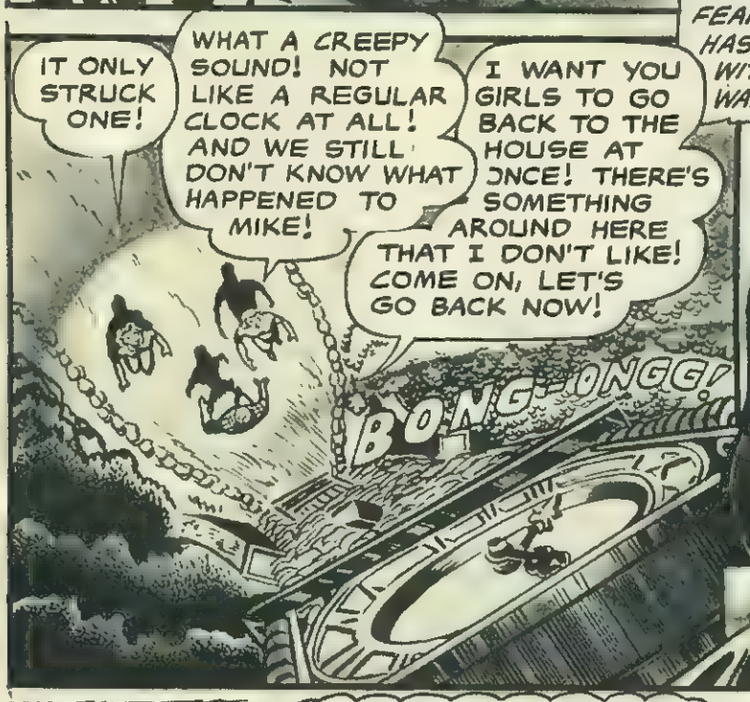

AND LATER...
WHAT A LOVELY OLD CLOCK TOWER, PETER! SUCH A SHAME TO LET IT ROT AWAY! I WONDER WHEN THE CLOCK LAST RAN?
FIFTY YEARS AGO WHEN GRANDFATHER LEFT! LOOK—IT STOPPED EXACTLY AT NOON—OR-MIDNIGHT!
IT'S THE ONLY CLOCK AROUND HERE! AND GRANDFATHER SAID TO KILL IT! WHAT COULD HE HAVE MEANT?

AS THEY WALK AWAY AND RETURN TO THE HOUSE, AN ODD TRICK OF MOONLIGHT TURNS THE CLOCK FACE INTO SOMETHING FIENDISH...

LATER THAT NIGHT, MIKE CANNING, THE OTHER MAN IN THE PARTY, STEPS OUT FOR A BREATH OF AIR...
HMMM— THAT IS AN INTERESTING BIT! MIGHT BE ABLE TO USE IT IN MY NEXT BOOK! LOOKS SPOOKY ENOUGH, AND A SWELL PLACE FOR A MURDER! I COULD CALL IT THE BODY IN THE CLOCK TOWER!
THINK I'LL JUST GO UP AND HAVE A LOOK AROUND! PETER SAYS THE CLOCK HASN'T RUN FOR FIFTY YEARS, SO I CAN'T HURT ANYTHING!
A MOMENT LATER HE ENTERS THE MACHINERY ROOM! OVER EVERYTHING HOVERS THE SMELL OF DUST AND DECAY...
WHEW! DUST AN INCH THICK! AND LOOK AT ALL THAT RUST... BET THIS OLD CLOCK NEVER RUNS AGAIN! WELL, I'D BETTER BE GETTING BACK!
SUDDENLY, BEHIND HIM...
HUH? THE DOOR SLAMMED SHUT! M-MUST HAVE BEEN THE WIND, I GUESS! BUT THIS PLACE IS GETTING ON MY NERVES!
LOCKED! I'M LOCKED IN! B-BUT IT CAN'T BE— THERE'S ONLY A BOLT! YET THE DOOR WON'T B-BUDGE!
SLAM
THEN HE HEARS A BLOOD-CURDLING SOUND— THE SINISTER CRUNCH AND GRIND OF GEARS! AND THE FLOOR...
Y!!!!!!!!— THE FLOOR! TILTING! I'M SLIDING DOWN INTO THE CLOCK MACHINERY! GAAAAA— IT'S RUNNING! I'LL BE...
WHIRRR
RATTLE
... CRUSHED— AHHHHHHHHHHH—


CANNING'S FEARFUL SCREAMS ARE HEARD IN THE HOUSE...
OH, THOSE HORRIBLE SCREAMS! WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE IT WAS?
SOUNDED LIKE IT CAME FROM THE CLOCK TOWER!
THAT WAS MIKE'S VOICE! I'M SURE OF IT! BUT THERE'S NO SIGN OF HIM!


PETER! ALICE! LOOK— THE CLOCK! THE HANDS— THEY'RE TELLING THE RIGHT TIME!
B—BUT I THOUGHT IT WAS BROKEN!
SO DID I, BUT IT'S RIGHT! IT'S EXACTLY EIGHT O' CLOCK BY MY WRIST-WATCH.


IT ONLY STRUCK ONE!
WHAT A CREEPY SOUND! NOT LIKE A REGULAR CLOCK AT ALL! AND WE STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO MIKE!
I WANT YOU GIRLS TO GO BACK TO THE HOUSE AT ONCE! THERE'S SOMETHING AROUND HERE THAT I DON'T LIKE! COME ON, LET'S GO BACK NOW!
BONG-ONGG!

SOMEWHERE IN PETER'S MIND IS A HAUNTING FEAR! HE SENSES THAT SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAS HAPPENED TO MIKE, SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE STRANGE CLOCK, BUT HE DOES NOT WANT TO ALARM THE GIRLS UNDULY! SO...
BUT IF YOU'RE GOING TO HUNT FOR MIKE, WHY CAN'T WE GO WITH YOU?
YES! WE D-DON'T WANT TO STAY HERE ALONE!
DON'T BE SILLY! MIKE IS PROBABLY LOST IN THE WOODS SOME-WHERE, MAYBE EVEN INJURED, AND I'LL FIND HIM QUICKER IF I'M ALONE! YOU'LL BE PERFECTLY ALL RIGHT HERE!

LATER, PETER DOES MAKE A QUICK SEARCH OF THE GROUNDS AROUND THE HOUSE...
NOT A SIGN OF MIKE IN THE WOODS! NOT EVEN A FOOT-PRINT! IF HE'S AROUND HERE, I'VE GOT A FEELING HE'S IN THE CLOCK TOWER! EITHER INJURED OR — DEAD!

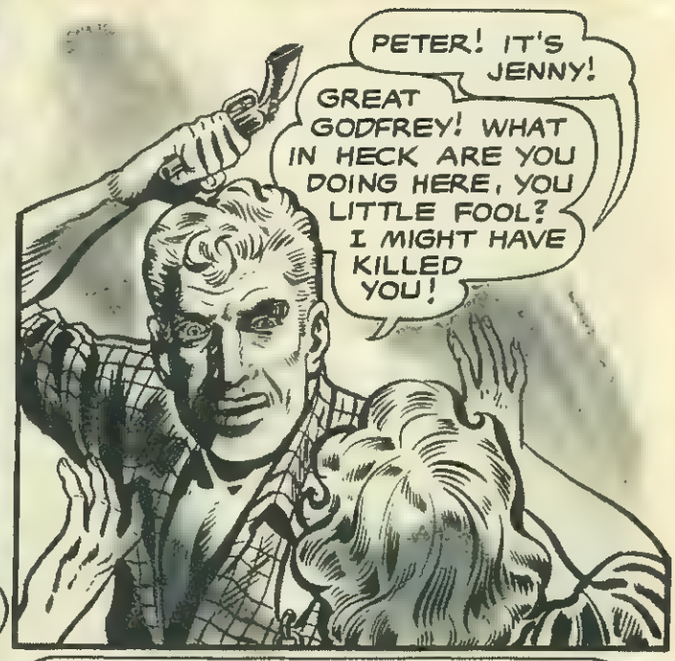
I'M SURE NOW THAT GRANDFATHER WASN'T JUST TALKING NONSENSE WHEN HE DIED! HE KNEW SOMETHING! AND HE MEANT TO TELL ME, WHEN HE SAID TO KILL THE CLOCK!

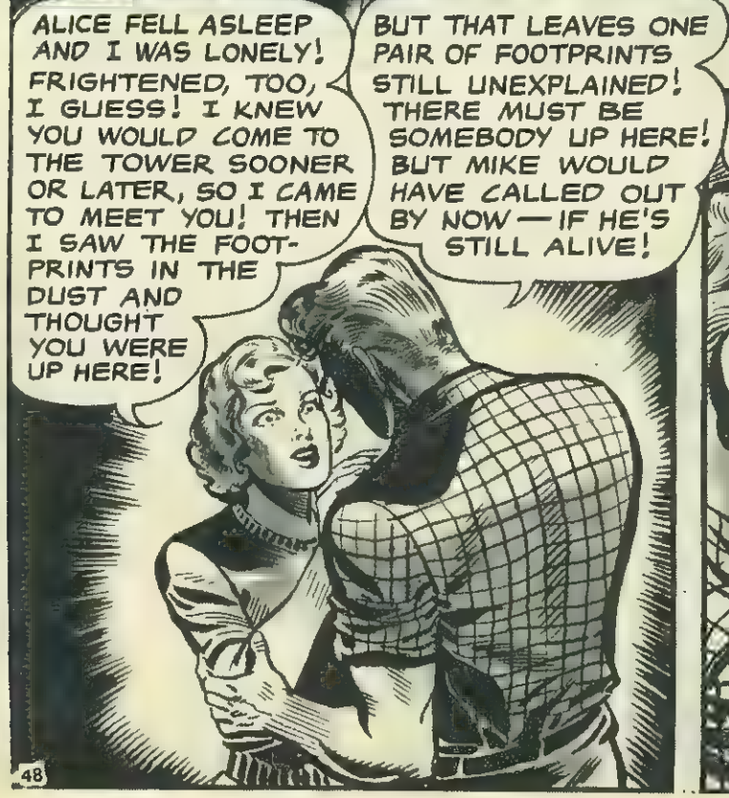
FOOTPRINTS GOING UP, BUT NONE COMING DOWN! TWO SETS OF THEM! THEY'VE BEEN MADE JUST RECENTLY— SO WHOEVER WENT UP THERE— IS STILL THERE!

PETER GOES QUIETLY UP THE ANCIENT STAIRS...
THE GIRLS WERE RIGHT! THIS PLACE IS CREEPY! MAKES ME FEEL AS IF SOMETHING WERE TERRIBLY WRONG, AS THOUGH SOMETHING IS WAITING TO POUNCE OUT OF THE SHADOWS!

AS HE REACHES THE TOP OF THE STAIRS, A CHILL OF TERROR EDGES ALONG HIS SPINE, AND THE HAIRS PRICKLE ON HIS NECK...
T—THERE IS SOMETHING! IN THOSE SHADOWS— WAITING FOR ME!

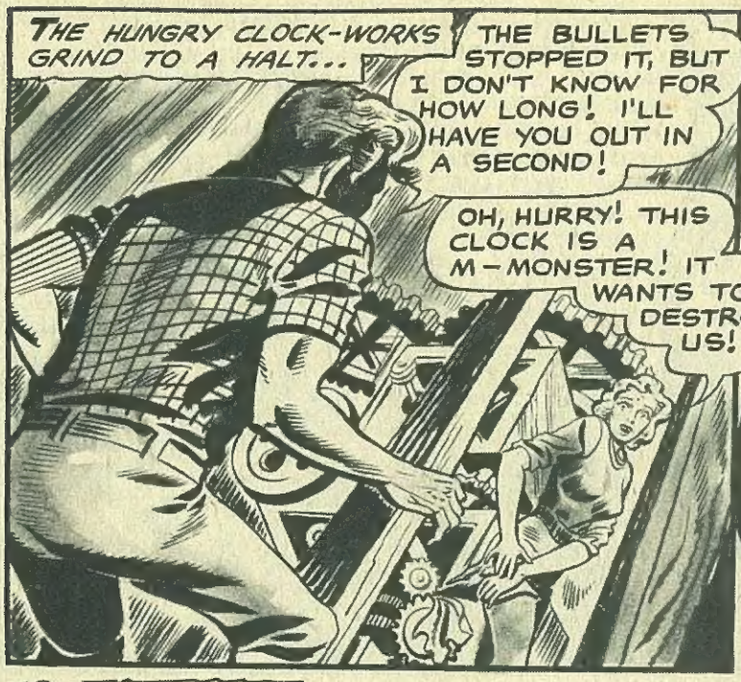
GOT YOU, WHOEVER YOU ARE! AND MAYBE YOU'D BETTER DO A LITTLE TALKING...
OHHHHHHH—


PETER! IT'S JENNY!
GREAT GODFREY! WHAT IN HECK ARE YOU DOING HERE, YOU LITTLE FOOL? I MIGHT HAVE KILLED YOU!


ALICE FELL ASLEEP AND I WAS LONELY! FRIGHTENED, TOO, I GUESS! I KNEW YOU WOULD COME TO THE TOWER SOONER OR LATER, SO I CAME TO MEET YOU! THEN I SAW THE FOOT-PRINTS IN THE DUST AND THOUGHT YOU WERE UP HERE!
BUT THAT LEAVES ONE PAIR OF FOOTPRINTS STILL UNEXPLAINED! THERE MUST BE SOMEBODY UP HERE! BUT MIKE WOULD HAVE CALLED OUT BY NOW — IF HE'S STILL ALIVE!

LET'S TAKE A LOOK IN HERE! MUST BE WHERE THE CLOCK MACHINERY IS HOUSED! MAYBE WE CAN FIND WHAT STARTED THE CLOCK RUNNING AGAIN!
ALL R-RIGHT, BUT THIS PLACE TERRIFIES ME, PETER! LET'S LEAVE AS SOON AS WE FIND MIKE!

THE DOOR INTO THE MACHINERY ROOM OPENS EASILY, AS IF ON OILED HINGES...
WHY, IT SEEMS TO BE IN PERFECT CONDITION NOW! WHO COULD HAVE DONE IT, PETER? DO YOU SUPPOSE MIKE...
WHY WOULD MIKE FOOL WITH A CLOCK THAT HASN'T RUN FOR FIFTY YEARS? BESIDES, THERE IS NO SIGN OF HIM!
WHIRRR
CLICK
RATTLE-
TICK-
TICK-TOCK-
SOMEBODY HAS DRENCHED THIS THING IN OIL, NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT! SEE HOW IT GLISTENS... NOT A SIGN OF RUST NOW! BUT WAIT A MINUTE! THIS ISN'T OIL!
IT'S BLOOD! THE MACHINERY HAS BEEN GREASED WITH HUMAN BLOOD!
OHHHH! YOU MEAN THAT— MIKE?
AND THEN THE CLOCK SEEMS TO GIVE A TICKING-TOCKING — TERRIBLE CHUCKLE AND THE FLOOR TILTS CRAZILY...
PETER! HELP ME— AAAAAA!
THE F-FLOOR! CRAZY! THROWING US DOWN INTO THE MACHINERY! TRY TO GRAB SOMETHING, JENNY!
PETER'S FINGERS FIND A CREVICE IN THE FLOOR AND HE HANGS ON! BUT JENNY IS NOT SO LUCKY...
SAVE ME! DON'T LET IT GET ME, PETER! OH, HELP ME! EEEEEEEE-
WHAT CAN I DO? I'M HELPLESS! BUT WAIT— THERE'S ONE CHANCE! A SLIM ONE...
AIEEEEEEEEE!
MY ONLY HOPE! IF I CAN SMASH THE MACHINERY AND GET JENNY OUT!



CONTINUED ON BACK COVER

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PETER AND JENNY HEAR THE SCREAMS...
GREAT SCOTT! THE CLOCK— IT'S MOVED! AND IT'S GOT ALICE!
M-MOVED? OH, WE MUST SAVE HER! HOW H-HORRIBLE!
AAAAAAA-

BUT SUDDENLY ALICE IS GONE...
S-SHE'S DISAPPEARED! AND THE CLOCK— IT'S MOVING CLOSER TO THE HOUSE! PETER— IT'S AFTER US!
I KNOW! THAT FIENDISH THING RUNS ON HUMAN FLESH AND BLOOD! THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO POOR MIKE— AND NOW TO ALICE!

BONG
BONG-OONG
IT'S STRIKING AGAIN! T-TWICE!
ONCE WHEN IT GOT MIKE! TWICE NOW! DON'T YOU SEE— IT'S KEEPING COUNT OF ITS VICTIMS! RUN— RUN! MAYBE WE CAN GET AWAY IN THE WOODS!

A FEW MINUTES LATER...
I THINK WE'VE LOST IT AT LAST! BUT WE'VE GOT TO KEEP GOING UNTIL WE'RE SAFE! IF ONLY I HADN'T DROPPED THE FLASHLIGHT!
I—(GASP) —CAN'T GO MUCH FARTHER! I'M ALMOST DEAD! C-CAN'T WE STOP TO REST?

THEN OUT OF THE SHADOWS...
EEEEEEEEE— THE CLOCK AGAIN! IT FOLLOWED US!
THE HANDS! RUN! RUN!
YAAAAA-

BONG-
BONG-
BONG-
BONG-
THE CLOCK STRIKES FOUR TIMES—AND THEN ONLY SILENCE...
The End